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TRUSTING YET.

BY E. B. LYTTON.

Heart of mine, beat not so wildly
O'er the hopes of future years,
For the morrow's sun may find me
Weeping disappointment's tears.
Have the lessons long and dreary
All been given you in vain?
Has the same delusive whisper
Won thy trust complete again?

Thou hast known of woe and sorrow
All that human heart could know!
Yet thou wouldst through love, forgetting,
Cling to those who struck each blow.
And thou still are bravely beating
Measured tunes of trust and hope
For a happy, bright to-morrow--
That for thee may never ope.

But, O heart, beat ever bravely,
Bear me on through weal or woe,
Let no one except thy Maker
Of thy burthens ever know.

A BLACK VEIL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FROM GLOOM TO SUNLIGHT," "LORD LYNNE'S CHOICE," "WEAKER THAN A WOMAN," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.—[CONTINUED.]

THE letter was written on stiff cream-laid paper with a coronet at the head. It was brief and business-like.

"Dear Miss Pentarn,—I shall call at Pentarn House this morning to see a young relative of mine, Miss Laurie Dundas. Will you please see that she has no engagement that will detain me?

"Yours faithfully,
"L. M. ULLSWATER."

"Is that all, Miss Pentarn?" I cried, in an agony of disappointment. "Where is my mother?

"I have always hoped that the first of my own people I should see would be my mother.

"Is this all?"

"You will find it enough, Laurie. I have an idea that this lady is coming to inspect you, to see what you are like, if you are presentable and have nice manners."

"What am I like, Miss Pentarn?" I cried in an agony of suspense. "What am I like?"

My governess looked at me slowly, thoughtfully, as though accurately noting my features.

"I have never flattered you in your life, Laurie," she said.

"You are a sensible girl, and will not be unduly elated if I tell you that you are beautiful."

What pleasant words!

"Will they like me all the better for that?" I asked.

"In the world which will be yours; but do not be vain, child. Vanity spoils the most exquisite beauty."

"Who is 'L. M. Ullswater,' Miss Pentarn?" I asked after a pause.

But my governess did not seem much inclined to talk.

"I do not know what relative she is to you Laurie; but the Ullswaters are an old English family—very proud, I have always understood, and not too wealthy. I remember that Lady Cayne, Emelia's mother, once spoke of Lady Ullswater here as the proudest woman in England."

"What can there be in common between her and me?"

"That I cannot tell you. You will soon know, my dear.

"Now, Laurie, you have hitherto led a quiet uneventful life; but, if I am right in my forebodings, you will have no more quiet, no more rest.

"I want you to take yourself well in hand as it were.

"You know your chief faults. You are impetuous and reckless; you seldom stop to count the cost of an action or a word. Beware of that reckless impetuosity; you do not know whither it may carry you, or to what it may lead.

"Beware of it, Laurie."

"I will indeed," I promised. But I could not listen attentively; my whole heart was engrossed in a thousand different fancies and dreams.

Who was Lady Ullswater, and why did she want to see me?

Could it be possible that she was my mother?

Miss Pentarn did not give me much time to think.

She said I must be dressed, and ready for my visitor.

She might call early, and she would not like to be waiting.

For the first time I looked anxiously in the glass, and felt proud of the long ripples of shining black hair.

"You are beautiful."

The words haunted me with a pleasant sound.

Just as I had finished dressing, the summons came which I had been expecting so many years.

* * * * * *

It was Miss Pentarn herself who came to my room. She looked at me critically.

"Much depends on first appearances," she said.

"You will do, Laurie.

"How pale you are, dear child! Are you ill?"

"No; but it may be my mother who is waiting for me," I said, my lips quivering with excitement.

"Dismiss that idea from your mind, Laurie.

"Whatever Lady Ullswater may be to you, she is not your mother. Of that I can speak with the utmost certainty. Now come!"

I had waited thirteen years for this ordeal, and now, as I looked back to the sunlit garden, I wondered for a moment whether I should be much happier. Then came a rush of wild excitement. I could have cried aloud in my joy.

"You will go in quietly, Laurie," said Miss Pentarn. "Remember what I have so often told you; first impressions are everything."

I took Miss Pentarn's hand in mine. It was something at least to cling to. We crossed the corridors, and descended the great oaken stairs.

I could almost hear the beating of my own heart.

Then Miss Pentarn, with a resolute hand, opened the drawing-room door, and we entered together.

A tall stately lady stood at the window. She did not move until we were in the centre of the room.

She gave me the impression of a person nerving herself for an effort.

A red mist seemed to rise before my eyes; there was a sound as of rushing waters in my ears.

She turned towards us with a rustle of her rich silk dress, and I saw as proud, cold, handsome a face as any one could imagine.

She took one step forward, and then our eyes met.

I cannot tell what passed through my mind; but I shall never forget that moment.

"Miss Pentarn?" she said with a bow.

My governess bowed in return, and then introduced me.

Lady Ullswater looked at me with keen critical eyes.

"So this is Laurie Dundas! I must say she has the St. Asaph face. I hope you are well, Miss Dundas. I am—at least so I am told—your aunt."

What a greeting to have waited thirteen years for!

The proud face and the proud eyes seemed to grow colder as she gazed steadily at me. If she had said one kind word, if she had even smiled at me, I should have poured out my heart's love to her; but her pride roused mine.

I held my head well up in the air and returned her haughty glance.

"Did I understand that you are quite well, Miss Dundas?" inquired Lady Ullswater frigidly.

"I am quite well, I thank you," was my answer; and I was glad to find that my voice was proud and cold as her own.

For the whole world I would not have let her see my agitation; but I felt as though my heart must break, as though I must fall dead at Miss Pentarn's feet, my disappointment was great and so terrible.

I had no reason for the feeling; but I knew, from the look in this lady's eyes that she hated me. I felt it as by a sure unfailing instinct.

"I am told," she said, "that I am your aunt.

"As I cannot contradict the statement, I must, I presume, admit it."

I bowed but no word passed my lips.

"You have all the St. Asaph pride, Miss Dundas," continued Lady Ullswater, scrutinising my face.

"I congratulate myself upon having something belonging to so old a race," I replied, with great stateliness; and I saw on Miss Pentarn's face a troubled expression which said plainly, "Dear me, this will never do!"

"I have been accustomed to plain matters of fact all my life," Lady Ullswater remarked, looking at Miss Pentarn. "This is to me a most disagreeable piece of business."

Miss Pentarn could but bow amiably, being quite at a loss how to answer this imperious lady.

"I detest all mysteries," she continued; "and why there should be a mystery about Laurie Dundas puzzles me."

"I have been a mystery to myself for so many years," I said coldly, "that I may be pardoned if I pronounce myself tired of mysteries also.

"I should be well content to have done with them for ever."

I heard Miss Pentarn lost in a maze of words, all that I caught plainly being that such a matter was "most trying to the young."

It was evidently war to the knife between Lady Ullswater and myself.

"Why my brother should first of all have made an absurd marriage and then have concealed it from his friends is a complete mystery to me."

Miss Pentarn rubbed her fingers, as though to signify that she washed her hands of the matter.

I forgot the lady's pride and coldness; my heart was on fire. I stretched out my hands to her.

"Is my father living? Shall I see him?" I cried.

"I must beg of you to spare me any raptures," she said shrugging her shoulders. "I am too much annoyed to be able to endure them."

After that I would not have given expression for any feeling before her to save my life; I was determined to hold my own with her.

She should see that I had indeed what she called the St Asaph pride.

"I am afraid that I do not quite understand," I said.

"I have nothing likely to send me into raptures.

"I have been seventeen years without knowing whether I have a father.

"I may be forgiven for expressing some little curiosity to know what is the real state of the case."

"Laurie, my dear, you are not talking like yourself at all.

"You will shock Lady Ullswater," remonstrated Miss Pentarn.

But the lady smiled.

"I am not easily shocked," she replied. "I did not expect much. I need not detain you, Miss Pentarn.

"The Earl of St. Asaph is very ill, and I have been sent for Miss Dundas. I came much against my will."

Who was the Earl of St. Asaph?

Why should I be sent for because he was ill? Surely he was not my father.

But I would not put another question to this lady.

"There will be no need to wait for any packing," continued Lady Ullswater. "I am pressed for time, and everything belonging to the young lady can be sent after her to Yatton House."

"Just as you will," said Miss Pentarn.

In her eyes I read deep sympathy for me.

I could not tell whether anger or sorrow predominated in my heart; my whole body trembled with emotion.

At that moment I felt that not for anything in the world would I go away with this haughty woman.

"Miss Pentarn," I cried, as that astonished lady turned to me, her very cap-strings quivering from her excitement, "am I compelled to go away with Lady Ullswater?"

"I suppose so, my dear. Be patient, Laurie; remember your promise to me. Beware of reckless impulse."

But my appeal had evidently startled Lady Ullswater.

She was frightened into civility.

She looked at Miss Pentarn with a queer smile.

"I really cannot help feeling irritable," she said, with a superb manner. "I have been most fearfully tried—indeed the whole family has been cruelly distressed."

Her smile was for Miss Pentarn.

Her eyes seemed to say that it was all my fault.

"Have you anything that you would like to take with you?" asked Lady Ullswater, turning to me with a gracious expression.

"I cannot go until I have said good-bye to my schoolfellows and Miss Thanar and the garden."

"I hope the child is neither romantic nor sentimental," said Lady Ullswater, with what I felt to be a sneer.

"She is as nature made her," replied Miss Pentarn, with more spirit than I should have imagined her to possess.

"Then I hope Nature has not made her romantic.

"Bidding good-bye to a garden seems very much like it."

"I will not detain you ten minutes altogether, Lady Ullswater," I said.

Then I withdrew with Miss Pentarn from her haughty presence.

"I shall die, I shall die!" was my cry, as I walked, wringing my hands, down the oaken corridors.

"Oh, let me stay with you, Miss Pentarn! I will be your slave, your servant, anything—but let me stay! I shall die if I have to go away with that haughty woman!" And my tears and sobs might have touched the hardest heart.

"Matters will be better soon, Laurie. She will be different in time, dear. She has been distressed."

"By hearing of my existence, I suppose. Oh, Miss Pentarn, what is it like, this life I am going into?"

A few minutes later my companions, the girls with whom I had grown up, the governesses who had been my only friends, were all round me; even the servants knew that Miss Dundas was going.

If I had been in a condition to think or take notice, I must have been flattered by their grief.

The girls must have wondered why I kissed them with such passionate haste.

Then I stood alone again with Miss Pentarn.

I threw my arms round her neck.

"I shall come back, if it be only to die on the doorstep!" I cried: but she soothed me with kind loving words.

She bade me be gentle and patient, to wait and see; then, if I were really miserable, and could not bear my life, I was to come back to her.

She would take me in and love me always.

I should not need it, she was sure. She advised me to do my best.

Every one in this world had something to bear.

I stood for one minute at the window, bidding farewell in my heart to the pretty garden that was so dear to me.

I have often wished since that I had died as I stood there, before I knew the greatest pleasure and the greatest pain that life holds.

CHAPTER IV.

I DRIED my tears before going back to Lady Ullswater.

She should see no further emotion on my part.

I would meet her with pride and coldness equal to her own. She seemed very impatient to leave.

"Miss Pentarn, I was to say that all the customary arrangements will be made with you," was her parting remark to my governess.

"You really must excuse my haste; I have some pressing engagements."

The governess bowed, and I felt that she was the more refined lady of the two. We were conducted with due pomp and solemnity to the great hall door.

There I saw a carriage, with a coronet on the panels, and a coachman and footman in power.

In silence I took my seat opposite to Lady Ullswater.

How many times had I longed for this hour.

Yet now that it was come I was wretched beyond words.

I wondered if all my life would be like this—nothing but pain and disappointment. I had longed to see my mother's face; that before me was cold, proud, and indifferent. I had longed for love; I found disdain.

Oh, misery! Was this the leaving school and going home for which I had craved so eagerly?

I conquered the proud woman on her own ground.

I felt reckless enough now, and there was no gentle Miss Pentarn to restrain me. I would not ask my aunt one question; yet my heart ached to know what awaited me at Yatton House.

Should I find father and mother there, or would my life be spent with this proud and cold woman?

Death would be better than that! What should I find?

Whom should I see?

Would there be any brothers or sisters to greet me?

Her ladyship did not break her disdainful silence until the carriage stopped at the door of one of the most palatial mansions I ever beheld.

"This is Yatton House," said Lady Ullswater.

I tried to appear indifferent, and to my great delight succeeded.

With longing heart I looked at the windows.

Who was behind them?

What should I find there?

Was my mother waiting for me in one of these magnificent rooms?

Was my father ready to meet me? Oh, but for this barrier of ice—this cold proud woman watching me to see if she could detect emotion of any kind on my face—I might have felt happy!

What a house! I had never imagined anything like it.

The entrance hall bewildered me with its rich stained glass, its superb decorations, statues, and flowers.

"How is the Earl?" asked Lady Ullswater in a quick impatient tone of voice.

"I have not heard that there is any change, my lady," was the answer.

"Then ask at once. The world seems to me full of sluggards," said Lady Ullswater; and then she turned to me abruptly. "You had better come to my room at once," she said.

"I have not spoken to you because I could not endure to mention so odious a subject.

"Follow me."

There was nothing to be done but to obey though I longed to refuse.

She led the way through suite after suite of magnificent rooms.

My eyes were dazzled by the splendor and luxury that I saw around me.

We went up a noble white marble staircase half covered with rich crimson cloth and decorated with statues and flowers.

Then we came to a picture-gallery. It seemed to me that Lady Ullswater walked with even a prouder step than usual as we passed by the long line of family portraits. I had but a passing glimpse, yet I felt sure that there was a strong resemblance between my own face and those displayed on the walls.

We came at last to the door of her ladyship's chamber.

She opened it and found her maid there. I came to the conclusion that it was Lady Ullswater's habit to have a skirmish with every person she met.

The footman and a page crossing the corridors had both been briskly attacked, and her own maid came in for a share of her displeasure.

"Lyons, what are you doing here?" she cried.

"I thought you were with Miss Goodys, attending to the pink crepe dress."

"It is finished, my lady," replied the maid deferentially; "and I am doing what you wished to be done to the maroon velvet."

"Oh, very well!" said her ladyship. "Be good enough to leave it for the present, and come when I ring."

Quietly the maid left the room, and then Lady Ullswater turned her attention to me.

"By this time," she said, "you will have settled in your own mind that I am a very bad-tempered woman.

"Perhaps you are right. I have had quite enough to make me so. I am one of those people with whom everything in this world goes wrong.

"You had better sit down, for I have that to tell you which will surprise you, and I must have no fainting. I cannot bear scenes."

"I dislike them too," I said.

"A child like you should have neither likes nor dislikes," she said sharply.

"If I were the child you call me, I should not have suffered half so much," was my answer.

Nevertheless I followed her ladyship's advice, and took a chair.

She seemed, I thought, to hesitate a little before beginning.

"I do not know," she said, "why I have been selected to tell you what I consider a very shameful story.

"The only thing I can imagine is that my brother has been mad for the last twenty years. You do not, of course, know who you are?"

"I do not know, Lady Ullswater."

Her face softened suddenly with something like admiration.

"You are beautiful enough to be any one," she said as though compelled to speak against her will.

"You have the dark fatal beauty of the St. Asaphs."

After a few minutes silence, she added, "I have nothing very pleasant to tell you."

"I do not expect it; pleasant things have not found their way into my life at present."

"I do not think they will," she said. "I never interfere with other people or with their affairs.

"I am not bad-hearted, and I do not purposely give pain.

"But I suppose that I must tell you the truth, and that beating about the bush will be worst in the end.

"You know that you are in Yatton House. Well, the Earl of St. Asaph, who lives here is your father."

My father! I had learnt the truth at last then.

My hear gave a great bound.

After all these years, the empty words had became real, tangible.

I know that a sudden light flamed in my eyes, for she looked half sorry, half angry.

"The family name of the St. Asaphs," she continued, "is Dundas. If therefore, the story that your father, the Earl, tells be true, you are now Lady Dundas, his only child."

"And my mother?" I cried, in a low voice.

"I so long to see her."

The fact that my father was one of England's foremost peers, that I was his only child, a lady by birth and title, was as nothing to me; I longed to hear news of my mother.

The proud face grew much prouder and colder.

"I know nothing of your mother," she replied.

"I know nothing of your existence until yesterday."

"Oh, mother!" was the cry that came from me.

She did not notice this, but went on with what she had evidently been desired to tell me.

"You must quite understand your position," she said.

"You are Lady Dundas, the daughter of the Earl of St. Asaph.

"He passed the whole of his life as a single man; no one ever guessed that he was married.

"He is enormously rich, and my son, Sir Lancelot Ullswater, is his heir and next of kin.

"My daughters have always been looked upon as co-heiresses to his great wealth—in money I mean.

"You may imagine my feelings at your turning up."

"I am sure I would rather not have 'turned up,'" I answered drily.

The reality was so different from my dreams that it was rapidly becoming hateful to me.

I had dreamed of caresses, of loving words of kindly greeting. I cared little enough about titles.

The one word "mother" was the most attractive title in the world to me.

"I am bound to tell you one thing," said Lady Ullswater.

"I know that it is conventional to throw a veil over the faults of parents, to assume that they are perfect; but I am compelled to tell you that your father—my brother—has been a very wicked man."

I looked up aghast.

"You do not seem to hear me, Lady Laurie," went on Lady Ullswater. "I repeat that I believe your father to be a very wicked man.

"In these days it takes a great deal to startle people, but he is known as 'the reprobate Earl.'"

"Perhaps it is not true!" I cried. "I begin to understand affairs, Lady Ullswater. You do not like me—I am in your way—and so you speak evil of my father."

"I wish that it were so," she said, with more frankness than she had yet shown. "Alas, it is not! The Earl of St. Asaph has always been notorious for his wickedness."

"What are his crimes?" I asked in desperation.

"You may as well ask me what are not," she replied.

"He drinks, gambles, swears. Those are what one may call his minor vices; he has others darker and more terrible. He professes Atheism, and he has no respect for man.

"I would not tell you all this, but that you ought to know it."

How I longed, in the depths of my miserable heart, to be back in the sunlit garden where the trees, flowers, and birds made me so happy!

What were all my vain longings and fancies compared with this?

Less than nothing.

"I have not recovered from my surprise yet.

"The Earl never mentioned his marriage or you until yesterday.

"At first I could not believe him, but he seemed so thoroughly to enjoy my discomfiture and to chuckle over what he must have seen was my irritation that I believed him at last.

"One of his great pleasures is to inflict pain, and he knows how to do it."

O my beautiful dream-mother!

O gentle arms that were to have clasped me!

O loving lips that were to have kissed me!

All my bright beautiful visions had faded.

In their place was a stern reality—a grim severe, wicked father.

"Do tell me something of my mother," I pleaded.

"Oh, Lady Ullswater, take pity on me! You have daughters of your own; for their sakes tell me something of my mother."

"I would if I could," she replied earnestly; "but the Earl has never named her. He is very ill; the doctors say he must die; so he told me to write about you to Miss Pentarn. He will tell you his story himself."

"Must I see him?" I cried, in dismay.

"See him?" she replied. "If he recovers you will have to live with him and take your place in the world as his daughter."

Again I wished that I had died beneath the oak-trees.

CHAPTER V.

I COULD see that Lady Ullswater was not merely impatient, but angry at having to break this intelligence to me, angry at my existence.

"My husband," she continued, "had some of the best blood in England in his veins—the Ullswaters are amongst the oldest families in the land.

"But he was not rich; he lost the greater part of his money by the failure of some mines in which he was advised to speculate. That left us poor for our station. So that you must understand, child as you are, that we have lived in the hope of retrieving our fortunes by the wealth that Lord St. Asaph would leave behind him. He has a large fortune which does not belong to the entailed estates, and that my daughters have been brought up to consider theirs."

"I do not want it—if that is why you dislike me," I said indignantly; and her face cheered.

"It will not be a question of whether you like it or not," she said gloomily. "If you are, as he persists in saying, his daughter, and his marriage was a legal one, you must of course be his heiress."

"I will not touch his money!" I cried. "If he leaves it to me, I shall give it away."

A little smile curved the proud lips.

"Ah, you say so now! You will see what it is to have money when it comes. You will not talk so freely of giving it away."

"I would rather see my mother's face and receive her kiss than have all the money in the world!" I cried.

"Ah," said her ladyship quietly, "I have never understood sentiment, and never shall!

"My daughters are both here at Yatton House," she added, after surveying me for some minutes in silence; "and yesterday the Earl sent for my son, Sir Lance; so that the whole family were assembled. Perhaps you would like to make the acquaintance of your relatives?"—sneeringly.

"I am quite indifferent about it," I replied.

"I wish with my whole heart that I were back again at Pentarn House."

"I should advise you to return, by all means," she said slowly.

"I have been mistress of Yatton House so long that I shall not relish handing the reins to you."

"I do not want them," I returned very quickly.

"Neither your wishes nor mine will be consulted by—by the wicked old man who has brought us into this trouble," she remarked gloomily.

"Will you come into the drawing-room, or what will you do?"

"I should like to go to my own room first—that is, if I have a room," was my reply.

"Very well. I will ring for Lyons," said her ladyship. "She can attend to you. You will have a maid of your own soon, I suppose."

The bell was rung, and Lyons came.

"Will you show Lady Dundas to her room?" said Lady Ullswater; and she turned away, because she would not see the surprise on the woman's face.

I followed the maid quickly out of the room.

Lyons led the way to a spacious room on the first floor.

"This is one of the best rooms in the house my lady; will you take it?"

"It will do very well," I replied—"for the present, at least."

She seemed anxious to speak to me—to make some communication, or to ask some question; but I held the door half open as a hint to her that she was to go, and she had the good sense to take it.

Then I fastened the door and went to the window.

I wanted a few minutes to rest and think. I had been a schoolgirl when the sun rose—a girl whose whole heart was filled with passionate longing and fanciful dreams. I seemed suddenly to have grown into a woman whose life was filled with some dire trouble.

What a cruel, bitter disappointment mine was!

For thirteen long years I had hungered and thirsted for news of some one related to myself.

I had drawn such pictures in fancy as had made my heart glow.

I had longed passionately for home and this was the realization—chilling empty magnificence, a proud woman who hated me, a reprobate father, and no one in the wide world who seemed to care whether I lived.

Surely no girl ever wept more bitterly than I did then; never was sorrow more great than mine.

The days on which I had stood in the great bay-window at Pentarn House, watching the birds and the bees, seemed very far from me now. Before me lay a world of trouble.

When I had been alone for an hour, trying to collect my thoughts and to see my way a little more clearly, a gentle rap sounded at my door.

It was Lyons, who had come to say that Lady Ullswater would be glad if I would go down to the drawing-room.

She looked at me in surprise, for I had not yet removed my hat.

"Let me help you, my lady," she said; and, in unfastening my hat, my hair fell down.

The maid gave a little cry of admiration. My hair had always been luxuriant; the girls said it was wonderful.

It was black and shining as a raven's wing, and it had in it a natural ripple which no art could ever imitate; it was, too, not coarse, as such hair often is, but just as soft as silk.

It hung below my waist. I was fond of displaying it, but Miss Pentarn had discouraged my vanity. Still I could not help feeling pleased at the look of admiration on the maid's face; at any rate, I possessed one thing of which I might justly be proud.

"Will you let me arrange your hair, my lady?" asked Lyons.

I assented, and in a few minutes she had dressed it so artistically that I hardly knew myself.

Then she conducted me to the drawing-room.

At first I did not notice the magnificence of the room—its fine painted ceiling, the rare pictures, the profusion of ornaments and flowers, the handsome furniture, and the soft velvet-pile carpets.

I saw nothing but the three ladies looking intently at me, Lady Ullswater with a dark frown, her daughters with curiosity.

I advanced steadily, as, in a cold measured voice, Lady Ullswater said—

"My dear children, this is——"

She paused, her face grew pale, and it was evidently with the utmost repugnance that she gave utterance to the words—

"This is Lady Dundas, your uncle's daughter, and your cousin.

"Lady Dundas," she continued, "these are my two daughters, Miss Ullswater and Miss Margaret Ullswater."

The girls rose and bowed coldly.

They had evidently been discussing me for the last hour.

They did not greet me or bid me welcome, or indeed address one word to me.

They sat down again, and I stood alone, a stranger and an alien in my father's house.

For some minutes no one spoke; my heart ached in its desolation, but I felt myself steeled against my emotion.

"My daughters are like myself, Lady Laurie," said Lady Ullswater, fanning herself languidly; "they are too much taken by surprise to be able to say anything."

I answered that that was precisely my own case, and must beg for pardon for my silence.

I crossed the room, and, taking up a book—sat down to read.

The three exchanged puzzled glances, which said plainly enough, "What shall we do with her?"

"The Earl has sent to inquire if you have arrived," her ladyship remarked presently. "He will wish to see you soon."

"I shall be ready to go to him when he desires my presence," I replied; and for the next half-hour the silence remained unbroken.

Lady Ullswater sat fanning herself, while one of the young ladies was busily engaged in making point-lace, the other being occupied with a wonderful fabrication of beads and crimson silk.

I resolved that I would not be the first to speak.

* * * * * * *

No half-hour ever seemed to me so long as that.

I had intended to be very dignified; but I was only seventeen, and I had all the curiosity of a young girl.

I wondered what my companions were like, and presently from my shady corner I began to study them.

Miss Ullswater was a tall dark girl, her face something like her mother's—proud, cold, and handsome.

A fine girl she might justly be termed. I fancied I could read her character—haughty and impulsive, but just and upright—not one to inspire love perhaps, but worthy of all respect.

Her face just now wore a troubled expression, as though she was thinking of something that gave her great pain.

Her white fingers moved with wonderful rapidity, and one could see that work was a relief to her.

She was exquisitely dressed in a morning costume that displayed her figure to advantage.

She was evidently intellectual, if I could judge from her countenance and the color of her head.

I could not tell whether we should ever be friends, whether I should ever learn to like her; but I could not help feeling that it must seem hard to her that I should take her place.

Then I glanced across at the other sister.

She was fair, lovely.

Her eyes were blue as the wild hyacinth, and she had that fair fresh complexion which is perhaps as great a beauty as any bestowed on woman—in fact, she was the most beautiful girl I had ever seen.

Yes—exceeding beautiful was Margaret Ullswater, whom my appearance on the scene would perhaps deprive of a fortune.

I did not feel as confident about her character as I did about her sister's.

She might be what she looked—saint-like—or she might be very different.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

His Last Sleep.

BY JULIUS THATCHER.

TWICE a day, morning and night, the feeble old steps wended their way to the orchard back of the almshouse.

His face was seamed and tracked over by the footsteps of time; his hair was silver white, and when he spoke there was a tremulous tone to his voice, very saddening to the listener.

Three score and ten, an inmate of a pauper home; and yet, no matter how dismal was the weather, that same bent form would wend its way to the orchard.

We followed him one fine day late in the autumn.

Underneath the naked branches of a gnarled tree we found the old man.

His form was bending over a low, humble mound; his lips were vaguely uttering some thing unintelligible to our ears; his fingers, trembling and shaking, were picking the leaves from among the scant grass.

"Friend, why do you come here every day?"

He turned half startlingly towards us; upon his face a look of pain, and in his eyes an expression of pitiful melancholy.

"Hush!

"She's down there!"

"Who?"

"Here, come sit down. I'll tell you the story.

"They all know it about here—perhaps you don't."

We sat down by the old man, and he told us his sad story.

"Many years ago, a little stranger, a babe, was sent to bless two people living in a small red farmhouse among the trees. The babe grew and thrived; and, oh, what a comfort it was to those who watched over its growth to see it daily growing more and more beautiful!

"We called it Madge—we, its father and mother.

"The mother, she is lying down there under the withered grass; and the father, he's sitting here, old and sorrowing, with a withered heart.

"Madge was a favorite among the neighbors, and was always the belle of every gathering for miles around.

"She grew so sweet, so lovely, and—she was so true and gentle a daughter.

"But there! I need not tell you of that, for it only makes the pain here in my breast sharper. After Madge left school she went with us to a ball in the Town Hall. Madge was the belle, and it made my brain dizzy when I saw his face, the handsome stranger's, bending over the sweet face of our Madge.

"He was visiting at a neighbor's house for a few weeks, you see; and Madge being the beauty of the place, he came to see her. They told me that his father was a rich City merchant; and that he was a clever young fellow, who would make his mark.

"'Twas the old story.

"Madge was innocent, and was carried away by the stranger's city ways and genteel demeanor.

"He must have turned the girl's head with his false tongue and smooth words. One morning Madge was missing; the young stranger, he too was gone. One, two, three years went by, and not a word or a trace did we hear of her young man's people. If they knew anything about Madge, they never told me so.

"One winter's night, when we sat in the kitchen, her mother and I, a sleep came over us, and we both dreamed that Madge was seated in her little chair by the fire. We awoke.

"Madge, our Madge, had come back! She must have slipped through the doorway while we slept, for there she sat upon her chair.

"Oh, how white her face was!

"How black her hair looked, all hanging down about her neck and shoulders! How hollow her eyes were, and—oh, Heaven! how pained was the expression which shone in them as the firelight played upon her features.

"And—hush—it was the cry of a babe—she held a child upon her lap.

"It was a pretty child, with our Madge's face, but his, the stranger's eyes. We never chided Madge; I took the babe, and our Madge was put to bed.

"She never awoke, for the exposure, illness, and heart-disappointment had done their work.

"We laid her to rest in the village burying-ground and then went home.

"The babe grew, and finally, one day, he, its father, came and took the child away with him.

"I didn't ask for an explanation, for we understood it all.

"She was a mother, but not a wife.

"Things went bad from that time with us, and we were sent to the poor-house. She, Madge's mother died then. I wanted her to be laid here, where I could come and visit the spot every day.

"It does me good, yet it's painful, to sit here and think of the days long ago. Perhaps—hush! I hope it won't last long, for I have such sweet dreams at night; and by day I sit and dream too, for I hear familiar voices come to me from somewhere, and they tell me 'Come.'"

We left him.

His tears were too sacred for eyes to gaze on, his sorrows too deep for stranger's comforting condolence.

The next evening, just as the shadows began to fall, they went to look for the old man, and found him sleeping his last sleep.

Jack Brand's Doom.

BY RANDAL W. BAYLE.

IT'S no use, doctor, no use! You need not talk to me, for I will not listen. The warder did not want to let you in. No wonder!

Tell you all about it, doctor? Do you care to listen to such a wretch?

You see, I was raised in the coal mines, a bad place for a young man sometimes; but I worked hard, and studied o' nights, and by degrees the company came to trusting me more than the others.

About five years ago they sent me on business into the town.

It was many a mile away from where I worked, and I always stayed several days. It was there I first met my Mary.

Do you know, every time I say her name my brain goes round as if it would burst! If it only would, and I could forget! She was an orphan, and taught a school there—a dainty little lady, not fit for me.

How she ever took a fancy to such a great rough as I am I cannot tell.

Loved her?

I worshipped her!

I would have died even to save her from one sorrow!

For three years I saw her not very often; sometimes maybe it would be months before I went to town; but her face never left my mind for an instant.

It grew into my life, and every hard day's work was done for her, until one day I grew desperate, and dropped my work and went to her.

I told her all; just how poor I lived, how hard it would be for her, and then I asked her to marry me.

If ever a man had a taste of happiness I had at that moment when she looked up at me and said, "John, in all the world there is nobody I love as I love you!"

Happy!

Was it any wonder I thought I was happy then?

She was the only one that ever called me John; I was Jack to everybody else. But she was different.

I can see her now when I brought her home—such a contrast to anything she had been used to; but she smiled so brightly and talked so cheerily.

She was so different from the other men's wives.

She tried hard to be pleasant with them, but there were some of them who were jealous of her from the first.

Our house was the neatest and best kept of them all.

It was wonderful what work those slim white fingers could do; but then she never lolled over the gate or gossiped with the others, and that made them angry.

"Where did you get your lady wife, Jack? Ar'n't you afraid somebody will run off with her?" they would say, until, sometimes, only they were women, I could have knocked them down.

But she only smiled when I told her, and kissed my rough cheek or hard brown hand.

Once or twice a letter came for her, and she always seemed white for awhile.

I asked her who wrote, and she only said, "A friend."

I never would have thought of the letters again only for Bill Harkins, who brought one of them from the post-office.

"A fine gentleman's handwriting, Jack," he said, laughingly.

"You had better be watching your pretty wife."

Bill Harkins had been my friend all my life, but he never said a thing like that to me again, for he saw something in my face that made him hastily add, "Never mind me, Jack. It was only a joke."

It came upon me so gradually, that dark suspicion!

Once, when I came home suddenly from work, Mary was talking to a dark-eyed stranger, with hands, I noticed in a moment, very different from mine, white and soft.

She seemed worried; but he turned gracefully to me and asked his way to the nearest town.

I informed him, and he went away. She told me he had asked her the same question; but she had a headache, and did not seem to take much interest in him, so I did not bother her.

Some weeks after that her aunt was taken ill, and wanted her to go to town, and would I bring her?

I could not refuse, so I got leave of absence and took her there; but as I drove into the station I was sure I saw the face of that stranger, and she did too, for a startled look came into her eyes.

She only stayed a week, but how I missed her!

It seemed as if my life were gone out from me, and yet jealousy was busy with dark suggestions.

She was tired of me; I was too rough for her; and a thousand other thoughts.

There was no doubt, even to me, that she was not the same as she was the first year; and that thought grew upon me.

But she came home, and I was happier than ever.

One day I had forgotten something and came back early.

On my way home I broke my promise to her, and drank a glass of whiskey with Bill Harkins.

From the first moment of her coming she had set her face resolutely against drinking. You see, they were a wild set, and not one but what would laugh at the idea of giving it up.

But she was grieved if I touched it.

As I entered the door there stood my Mary, and beside her, clasping both her hands in his, stood the dark-eyed stranger. He started from her as I came in, and attempted to speak; but with one bound I sprang towards him.

I was so much stronger that in a moment he lay at my feet.

I had struck him in a fatal spot. The life-blood was flowing from him.

With a cry that is still ringing in my ears she threw herself in my arms and gasped out, "Oh, John, my darling, it was my brother!"

A chill went over me like the blast of snow, for there was a gurgling sound, and when I looked down at her she was dead in my arms.

"Heart disease," they said; but I murdered both.

The stranger was her brother, who, years before, had forged a check.

She thought he was dead when she married me, but afterwards he turned up and made her promise not to betray him, even to me, until he had sailed away again. He was bidding her good-bye then.

At the inquest it all came out, for her letters were found on him and read, begging him to let her tell her husband, as the secret was killing her.

In his last letter he wrote that as soon as the vessel had sailed she could tell me everything.

Do you know what happened in the awful silence that followed, when I crouched down on the floor with my darling in my arms?

The man that lay beside me, with the film over his eyes, put forth his hand to try to touch me, and gasped out, "Brand, poor old fellow, you did not mean it,"—and died.

Now you know all, doctor.

Is it any wonder that no words of yours can help me?

How could I plead for pardon, when my brain is burning and reeling with despair? Go talk to the other prisoners, who have not the blackest of murders to answer for. Is it any wonder that when they said I killed him I stood up in the court and exclaimed "Guilty?"

No, no; don't talk to me!

You are coming again?

You need not!

You cannot bring them back to life. In just one week I am to be hanged, and I wish it were to day.

You want to come to-morrow to see me? It's no use, I tell you; but—yes—you may come.

HOW A TOAD EATS.—Did you ever see a toad eat? It is the most absurd performance. First, a reflected look at the animated victual (it must be alive) over one shoulder, as it were—suggestive of being suddenly struck by an idea that the subject might be worth consideration. Second, conviction that there is something interesting about it, and a closer or prolonged inspection. Third, hesitation, obvious deprecation and doubt; now sitting bolt upright to ponder over the matter, and alternately raising and depressing the head in examination of the wriggling theme, with an action that reminds one irresistably of an old gentleman looking over and under his spectacles in order to get a better view of some object. Lastly, smack! the tongue is shot out with a long click, the meal-worm vigorously swept into the mouth with the four feet, a visible throb of deglution, a movement of the shoulders, which seems to presage the immediate entry of the victim into society once more (it does sometimes, but only as a temporary respite), a ten-second wink and the thing is done. Half a dozen more then satisfy Jack's appetite, as a rule; occasionally, when about to shed his skin, he refuses them altogether.

Bric-a-Brac.

HUNTING HUMMING-BIRDS.—The hunting of humming-birds is a favorite sport in Brazil and the West Indies. The natives use reed blow-guns, fourteen or fifteen inches long, and pellets of cotton wool, with which the little creatures are stunned and captured, while travellers shoot them with common table salt. In neither case is the plumage injured.

THE SIZE OF A PEA.—There is a watch in a Swiss museum only three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter inserted in the top of a pencil-case. Its little dial not only indicates hours, minutes and seconds, but also days of the month. It is a relic of the time when watches were inserted in snuff-boxes, shirt-studs and finger-rings. Some were fantastic—oval, octangular, cruciform, or in the shape of pearls, tulips, etc.

STEWART.—This common name is derived from "steward," anciently stedeward. "As in our ancient language 'stow' is our word for 'place,' so," writes old Verstegan, "is also 'stede' and 'stede-ward,' which for easiness of sound, the first 'd' being omitted is become 'stew-ard'—is as much to say as the keeper of the place, which in the moderne Teutonicke is called 'star-bower,' that is, 'stede-holder,' or place-keeper—the same that 'lieutenant' is in French, which corruptly in English we call liftenant."

THE WORD "COTTAGE."—To most persons the word "cottage" carries merely the idea of a small house as distinguished from a large one. But legally in England, a very clearly-defined meaning attaches to the expression. In its laws a cottage is described as a house without land to it. By the later statute her Majesty's lieges were forbidden to build houses unless they were surrounded by at least four acres of land; hence, properly speaking, a cottage is any small house without four acres, or without any land at all.

A WOMAN'S PROMISE.—Henry Carey, a cousin to Queen Elizabeth, after having enjoyed her Majesty's favor for several years, lost it in this manner. As he was walking in the garden of the palace under the Queen's window she asked him in a jocular manner: "What does a man think when he is thinking of nothing?" The answer was a very brief one. "Upon a woman's promise," he replied. "Well done, cousin," said Elizabeth "excellent!" Some time after he solicited the honor of a peerage, and reminded the Queen that she had promised it to him. "True" said her Majesty; "but that was a woman's promise."

A NUTSHELL PARISH.—Llandawke, in Wales, is one of the smallest parishes in England, and though it boasts a parish church of great antiquity, it can hardly show any congregation at all. To begin with, the entire parish is owned by a single owner, and in it there is resident only a population, including the landlord, of exactly one and twenty souls. From this must be taken the rector, the clerk, the beadle, and the sexton, leaving seventeen people who might go to church. Some of these, however, are children, and some would have necessarily to stay at home, thus reducing the number of possible church attenders by, say, seven. From the remaining ten it is only fair to make a reduction on account of people who might wish to attend a dissenting place of worship. All told, therefore, it does not seem very likely that more than five persons could be counted upon as regular church frequenters—a congregation which, must be the smallest, in England if not in the world.

A MOVABLE CHURCH.—The old church of Lancaster, Mass., which during its existence of nearly two centuries and a half has had only eight pastors, is still supported by a tax of the whole parish, an assessment being annually levied on every man's property for that purpose. It is said to be the only survivor of the o'd system in the country. An amusing story, which dates from the erection of the present edifice, the fourth or fifth since the Society was organized, is told as follows:—Captain Richard Cleveland was the only man in town who kept a coach. He came to meeting in grand style, and amid a very animated discussion as to the direction in which the Church should face, a Mr. Rugg suggested that, since Captain Cleveland always approached from the south, the church should face in that direction. A somewhat eccentric man, nicknamed "Old Beeswax," immediately rose and suggested that he could invent an improved bed-wrench which could be placed under the meeting-house, and each man as he approached might then twist the building around to suit his own convenience.

THE BEETLE.—The beetle, as is well known, figures prominently on all Egyptian monuments, and is represented usually as flying with a ball upon his head. The male is furnished with horns, these horns enabling him to perform a duty which is peculiarly his, namely, to carry balls of wet Nile-mud balanced on his head, for his mate at home to deposit her eggs in. The female is without these horns, and therefore cannot carry the pellet necessary for the security of the egg. The Egyptians, says a learned author, having seen the beetles industriously rolling the globe of clay, like their emblem of the sun, and seeing them also during flight decorated with the horned disc, their emblem of divinity, came to the conclusion that they were worshiping the sun, and held them in corresponding veneration. Again the egg deposited in the mud-pellet, after passing through the usual transformations, broke forth into life as a perfected scarabæus, and gave the Egyptians the emblem of life out of death. Hence its frequent appearance on the tombs and funeral vestments of ancient Egypt.

BY NEIGHBOR'S WELL.

BY E. T.

I would they'd come again, John,
Those days when we were young,
By neighbor's well; ah! then, John,
We sat whole evenings long.
The silent moon we watched o'erhead
From out the white clouds peep,
And talked of how the heavens were high,
And how the well was deep.

Just think how still that was, John—
The world all hushed to rest—
'Tis thus no more, alas! John,
Or just in dreams at best.
And when some distant shepherd's song
Trilled o'er the moorland lone,
Oh, John, 'twas music that indeed
Was sweeter ever known?

Sometimes at eventide, John,
I feel my heart still swell,
As when once side by side, John,
We sat by neighbor's well.
Then eagerly I turned me round,
As though you still were by;
Ah, John, the only thing I find
Is—that I stand and cry!

TIFF.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A GREAT MISTAKE," "ROSE OF THE WORLD," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXV.—[CONTINUED.]

"YOU do well to attempt no justification of yourself," Brian added, his voice full of a cold disdain.

"No," she answered faintly; "I know it would be useless."

Not another word was spoken between them until they reached the house.

In the hall a glorious wood-fire was burning, and the lamp had not yet been lit.

Ninon uttered a little sound of relief, and went to kneel down on the black bear-skin that was spread in front of the great fireplace.

"Quentin," she said, flinging her hat upon a table, "I am too tired to go a step further You will bring me a cup of tea? Bring one for yourself too, and then you can tell me what you have been doing with yourself since you went away."

Quentin looked as if he could hardly believe his ears, but departed nevertheless with great alacrity in search of the tea. Mr. Beaufoy went across the hall after him, unmoved to all appearance, leaving Ninon kneeling and warming her hands at the blaze, with the hovering Squire in attendance.

When her cousin came back, she was alone, having contrived to get rid of the Squire.

She stood up as he approached. Her eyes were blazing like splendid sapphires, her cheeks were as white as death.

"You said in your letter that you would come back if I promised to waltz with no one else but your on the night of the ball," she said abruptly.

"Well, I promise. You need not go away."

"Ninon!" the young fellow cried, amazed.

"And—you remember once refusing to give up my ring unless I drove with you to Dingley, as we did last summer?"

"Yes; I was half mad with pain," Quentin declared.

"I had no right to——"

"I would not go when you threatened me and demanded it as a bribe," the girl went on in a rapid undertone.

"But I will go to-morrow of my own accord."

"Ninon," cried Quentin, aghast, "what does this mean? Have you quarrelled with Brian."

She laughed.

"Does one quarrel with fifteen thousand a year?" she asked flippantly.

"I am sure, there is something wrong," urged the young fellow.

"Ninon, I will not be so selfish as to get you into further trouble. Do you think I can't see the change in your face? Good Heaven, that ever I should see Ninon Masserene look like that!"

His eyes, as haggard as the girl's own, were fixed despairingly on the sweet unhappy face.

"I came back because I could not keep away; but I believed you were happy, triumphant, having achieved your desire. I believe this, and I find you——"

The girl interrupted him with a passionate gesture.

"Are you afraid to drive me to Dingley?" she asked, breaking into a laugh.

"Afraid!" he echoed indignantly.

"Do you want me to give all my waltzes to sir Harry?"

Quentin then seized both her trembling hands.

"No," he said.

"Give them to me. I do not know what it means.

"But a man cannot be expected to turn away when the gates of Paradise are opened to him."

"No, of course not!" she said wildly. "Soon it will all—all be over; and in the meanwhile why should not we be happy while we can—you and I? It is we who have suffered the most, and——"

"Ninon," Quentin cried, in a passionate whisper, "take care how you couple my name with yours in that way! Take care, lest I should believe you are suffering the same pain as I! If I were but sure of that, not Brian nor any man should take you from me!"

"Believe nothing," she said, shrinking back a little and flushing faintly, "think of nothing, except that we are going to drive together to-morrow, and to dine in the little inn where we dined that day a hundred years ago!"

"What else is there that is worth remembering for the moment?"

He sat down beside her, and began speaking in a whisper, with his handsome fair head very close to her ear.

People crossing the hall on their way upstairs saw them sitting there together and exchanged significant glances.

Madame Du Mottay stopped to give Ninon a scolding for sitting in a draught; but she did not stir; and when, last of all, Mr. Beaufoy left the library, he found them still whispering together in the low light of the dying fire.

The next morning Miss Masserene did not appear at breakfast.

She told Madame Du Mottay that she had a headache, and meant to stay in her room till the evening; but, as soon as the way was clear, and every one was disposed of till luncheon-time, the men out with their guns, the women chatting over their embroidery, she went quietly down-stairs, and met Quentin in the park, and they drove together to Dingley.

It was not a cheerful drive, though Ninon appeared to be in wild spirits.

The wind had gone down since the night before—all through the long wakeful hours she had heard it blowing among the tree-tops and the turrets of the old house—but it had well nigh stripped the trees, so that the woods were a sudden stride towards winter and to have left the autumn far behind.

But louder and more persistent even than the October wind there had echoed in Ninon's brain the words that Brian had spoken to her under the shuddering elms in the park.

They would not let her rest now, when she was driving rapidly along at Quentin's side through the transient gleams of chilly sunshine that barred the quiet road.

While she was talking to her cousin, and laughing at his somewhat disturbed and anxious face, the words were recurring to her persistently—

"You are absolutely unworthy of an honest man's belief."

That was what Brian had told her. And it was true, she thought desperately, or why was she there with Quentin, defying, outraging the man who had given her his protection, who had but just returned from doing a brother's kindness to little lovely Tiff!

Why was she there with this poor fellow whose love she had permitted, encouraged, when Dick Strong was expected home every day, his honest heart full of faith in his promised wife?

The girl drew a long breath more than once, and tried to put these thoughts aside; but they refused to leave her in peace, they would make themselves heard.

"Shall we never get there!" she cried out at last, in an access of nervous irritability. "Is there no end to this drive?"

And then, without a word, Quentin had hastened his horses, and they arrived within a few minutes at the little inn.

"Now," Ninon said, when he had ordered dinner in the same little room looking on to the river, "to make it just the same as before, I should gather forget-me-nots on the bank down there by the alders, and you should play a waltz. But, you see"—turning from the window with her melancholy smile—"the forget-me-nots are all withered, and"—she opened the piano and struck a chord or two—"the waltz would be out of tune."

She went, shivering a little, towards the fire, where the newly-kindled wood was filling the room with smoke.

"Ah," she said, "the summer is over, Quentin, and we thought we could bring it back!

"But you see we cannot. Let us admit"—laughing dolefully—"that the excursion has been an utter failure, and let us make haste home as fast as ever we can!"

"Are you tired of me already?" demanded Quentin, in a passionate voice. "Ninon, do you care for anything or anybody in this world?"

"I really don't think I do," she said, with a laugh.

She was sitting absently twisting the elastic of her hat, which she held in her hand between her fingers.

"I believe I was born without a heart. Offer me your felicitations!"

Quentin went and stood opposite to her, leaning his elbow on the mantelpiece and looking down with wretched longing eyes at the girl's great loveliness.

"If so," he said, with bitter tenderness, "what is it that has brought that look into your face—that has changed you of late into a ghost of the beautiful proud Ninon I knew only three months ago!"

She flushed a little under his gaze; but she laughed again.

"I believe I have grown a little thinner," she said, pushing up the sleeve of her velvet gown, and looking at the delicate wasted wrist she laid bare—"the result of too much dissipation my dear Quentin. Florry does keep dreadful hours. I shall grow fat again when you are all gone, and I sink once more into the long doze which people in Marybridge call life."

"Suppose I declared that I would not go without you!" Quentin answered, in a low voice.

"Suppose I were to carry you off with me now—to-day—this very hour, Ninon? What would you say?"

"Oh, I should thank you with all my heart!" the girl declared, with a reckless laugh.

The color leaped into his blond face.

"Ninon!" he cried.

She lifted her arms wearily and clasped her hands behind her head.

"I am perfectly serious," she said suppressing a yawn.

"If you could carry me off, I would go with you this very moment. But you could not, you poor foolish fellow! You would think that you had me safe, and all the time it would only be the empty shell that had once held Ninon Masserene. Before we had got to the first station, the real miserable, restless, worthless Ninon would have escaped from you, and would be making her way back."

"To what—to whom?" demanded Quentin rapidly; and she flushed again.

"To nothing—to nobody," she answered, with a laugh.

"To the weariness of spirit, the boredom, the discontent in which you found me last summer, and from which it is written that I am never to escape."

"Except by your marriage," Quentin said abruptly.

"My marriage!"

She smiled drearily.

"For the moment I had absolutely succeeded in forgetting that exhilarating prospect.

"But, as you say, it will of course open up to me an earthly Paradise in which I shall soon forget all previous suffering, and, as the story-books say, 'live happy ever after.' But, in the meantime, here is dinner, I hope you are hungry—as hungry as I am."

In spite of this assertion Quentin saw that she touched no food, and that from time to time she cast anxious glances at the darkening afternoon.

"You would like to start early?" he said, as they rose from the table.

"I will stay as long as you like," she answered, "provided you arrange to drive me while it is still light through Marybridge and past my step-mother's cottage."

"We will go at once," he said, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"I am afraid that, so far as you are concerned, child, the excursion has been a failure indeed."

"And not for you?" she asked, looking wistfully into his clouded face.

"I have had you with me for a few hours" he answered.

She put out her hand and softly touched his arm.

"You are so good—you have always been so good to me," she said, in a broken voice.

"And—there is the ball to come. I promise you that this time no one shall rob you of your promised waltzes."

A few sullen drops of rain were beginning to fall and blur the diamond panes of the little lattice-windows.

The wind seemed to be rising again, and again, as it blew, Brian's words came back to her——

"You are absolutely unworthy of an honest man's belief."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

WHEN Ninon went back to the Priory, it was quite dark. Quentin walked to the house with her, and left her to get in by the door that opened into the shrubbery, the key of which she had taken with her in the morning.

Cold and tired and dispirited, she was crossing the dusky hall, when Brian spoke her name; and saw she that he had been waiting for her, and that he had seen her come in.

"Will you come in here for a moment?" he said coldly, as he opened the door of his own room, a little study lined with books and hung with tapestry, which she never entered before.

She passed in before him without a word as he held the door.

A fire was burning, and Brian's collie, lying on the hearth rug, got up and welcomed her in a friendly manner.

The girl touched him gratefully with her wasted fingers.

Even a dog's kindness was welcome to her at that moment.

"I may warm my hands?" she said turning to Mr. Beaufoy with her melancholy smile.

"Pray sit down," he answered, wheeling a chair closer to the earth: but she shook her head.

"I will go as soon as you have said what you have to say," she answered. "But the drive was very cold, and my fingers are almost numb."

Indeed she was shivering under her fur cloak as she stood holding out her palms to the blaze and looking with a curious repressed eagerness about the room.

There was one or two photographs in antique frames.

She saw one of Florry in her bridal dress, another of a dark sweet-looking woman, who must have been Mr. Beaufoy's mother. The rest were of men.

"Where have you been, Ninon?" Mr. Beaufoy began, when he had shut the door, and had gone to stand near her before the fire.

"I have been to Dingley with Quentin," she answered quietly. "I dined with him at the inn there—we have only just now got back."

He looked at her for some moments in a despairing silence.

She was still carefully warming her cold hands, turning the little palms luxuriously to the flame.

"You told Florry that you were ill, and meant to remain in your room all day," he said then.

"Yes, I know," she answered, in the same quiet way. "It was an untruth. I promised Quentin last night that I would go."

He uttered an ejaculation of passionate contempt.

Ninon winced as she heard it, and stooped involuntarily to stroke the dog again. But the careless smile had not left her lips.

"Ninon," Brian burst forth, "will you tell me what is it that you hope to gain by this reckless, this most unwomanly conduct?"

"Nothing," she answered, almost breathlessly.

Her heart seemed to leap into her mouth. His coldness she could resent; his anger thrilled her strangely.

"Have you forgotten what I told you two days ago, that Mr. Strong is expected hourly to return?"

"No; I have not."

"And yet, remember it, you run the risk of breaking the engagement to keep which you did not hesitate to drag me into a position against which every manly instinct in me revolted—you did not hesitate to deceive Tiffany's mother—to prepare for the child herself perhaps new misery when the deception is found out."

"I know. I have done all that. And as you say, I have risked everything for the sake of this drive with Quentin.

"I meant to tell you to-night if you did not ask me.

"I wanted you to understand that I am tired of struggling, that I give in. What does it matter?

"Sooner or later it will be over, I suppose, though it seems long enough while it is passing."

"Ninon," the young man cried "what do you mean?"

"You told me last night," she went on, "that I was absolutely unworthy of an honest man's belief.

"And I suppose I am. But, at least, I am telling the truth now. The letter that Quentin wrote to me was to say that Florry had begged him to return to the ball, but that he would only consent to do so if I would promise to waltz with no one but him all the evening.

"He said that he would take silence for consent.

"But I wrote and said that he must not come back on that condition. And then you made me burn the letter, and he came, believing that I had consented."

"You wrote again!" cried Brian scornfully. "You met each other in the park on the evening of his return!"

"You say so," she answered, with a weary smile; "and I shall not try to convince you to the contrary. Of what use would it be in the face of what I have done to-day? Only I want you to know that I have promised him to waltz now."

"You have promised to waltz only with him?"

"Yes. And just now—it was still light while we were driving through Marybridge—Sir Harry Durham saw us, and I dare say my step-mother when we passed by the house. You see you will not want for excuses for breaking with me."

What could he say as she stood there in her melancholy young beauty speaking her own doom, condemning herself to so much future suffering?

"I am rightly punished" he said at last, with seething bitterness, "for lending myself, at a woman's entreaties, to a lie.

"I might have known that you would not be true even to your own untruth."

A shudder ran through her, and she then turned to the fire, putting one hand against the tall chimneypiece, as if to support herself.

"Only to day," he went on, "while I believed you to be in your own room suffering, and in spite of what occurred last night, I endured that woman's vulgar innuendoes and did not deny what they implied.

"I felt it my duty to call upon her and explain the arrangements that had been made for Tiff.

"I determined to keep my word to the last, at the cost of no matter what annoyance and self-contempt; and now you stand there and tell me you have been false to me, as you have been false to your lover, to your sister, to our blood—and all for what?"

She did not answer.

Indeed his voice, hoarse with suppressed anger and passion, began to sound very far off in her ears.

She had passed many sleepless nights of late, all day long she had not tasted food; her misery was almost more than she was able to stand.

"Not a word!" he said bitterly. "Well, go your own way!

"From this moment you are free to do exactly as you please."

She lifted her hand from the chimney-piece and began to walk slowly across the room towards the door.

"With Quentin I have no longer the right to remonstrate," he continued; "nor should I care in any case to do so.

"The one person, it seems to me, who is to be pitied in the whole wretched business is poor Richard Strong."

She waited, with her hand upon the lock, until he should stop speaking.

"Yes, you may go," he said.

"I thought perhaps that some lingering regard for your betrothed husband might have induced you to listen to reason. But I was mistaken; and you need fear no further interference on my part. From this day forth, Ninon, I have done with you!"

A dead silence fell upon the room, a silence that seemed charged with pain.

Then Ninon said faintly—

"Will you open the door for me please? I——"

He was about to do it, when he saw her turn deadly white, and instinctively he put out his arm to support her from falling into the hallway.

"You are ill?" he said hurriedly.

"No," she faltered. "No—I——"

But even as she said the words she fell back heavily against his shoulder, and he

saw that she had lost consciousness and lay like one dead within his arms.

Distractedly he gathered her closer to him, feeling her cold hands, her forehead damp with an icy dew.

"Ninon," he whispered wildly, "what have I said to you? What have you driven me to say?

"Speak to me!

"Look at me!"

But the sweet lips were mute and cold, the heavy eyes were closed.

He looked round in despair.

How could he call for assistance—how explain her presence in his room, at a time when she was supposed to be up stairs, ill? A flask was on the table, and, still holding the fainting girl on his left arm, he reached across with his right, and managed to pour out some of the sherry that the bottle contained.

It was some moments before he could get her to swallow it; but when she did so the color began to steal back into her face and the warmth into her lips; her hands grew less rigid.

But how wan and frail she looked, the young man thought.

"How is it I have never noticed the change in her?" he asked of himself anxiously, as again and again he moistened her pale lips with the wine.

"She is killing herself with all this folly, and there is no one to save her from it."

A heavy sigh broke from Ninon.

She was coming to herself.

Brian stooped and pressed a kiss upon her hair; and at the touch the girl opened her eyes, and looked bewildered into his.

For some moments they stood thus, as if fascinated by the long gaze.

"You are with me!" he whispered then. "Don't be afraid!"

The words broke the spell.

A deep flush rose in her pale cheeks; she tried to stand and to release herself from his clasp, to gather up her loosened hair.

He took his arms from about her at once.

"I beg your pardon," he said coldly. "It was only because you were ill, and I did not like to call."

"I understand," she answered faintly, hardly yet mistress of herself.

"Forgive me—I—I am sorry—I gave you so much trouble.

"I will go now."

"No," he urged. "You are not yet able. Stay here; the room is at your disposal. I will go now."

But already, with unfaltering steps, she was gone.

* * * * * * *

The one bitter drop in Madame Du Mottay's cup was removed, on the day of the ball, by the assurance that Mrs. Masserene would be unable to attend that festivity.

Ninon was summoned to Laurel Lodge in the morning, to find her step-mother in bed with a severe cold, and was enjoined to make due apologies in her name to Mr. Beaufoy and Madame Du Mottay, and to be sure to come as early as possible on the day after the ball, in order that Mrs. Masserene might hear all about it.

Ninon had the usual scene to endure at her step-mother's hands—the usual vulgar exultations, the usual coupling of her name at every moment with that of Mr. Beaufoy.

"I never saw a man so head over ears in love in all my life!" declared the poor woman, in her hoarse voice.

"Why he couldn't mention your name without turning pale, just like a girl! And see what he's going to do for Tiff!

"It'll be the first lift any of the family have given me with either of you. And goodness knows it isn't before it is wanted!"

"What will she do when she knows the truth?" Ninon was saying blankly over and over again as she drove back to the Priory.

It was a question which urged itself upon her now at almost every moment of the day and night.

It must so soon be decided.

Her long suspense was almost at an end. Dick was daily expected, and with his return a new life would begin for her—or rather she would go back to the old existence which had been interrupted by the arrival of Brian and his sister at the Priory. With the ball would end Florry's reign.

She was to leave almost immediately afterwards for Paris and her long suffering Gaston.

Quentin would go too, of course: the brothers were not on such terms as could warrant his making Brian's house his home. And Brian?

Ah, what did it matter to her whether he went or stayed?

Were they not even now worse than strangers, though she was a guest under his roof?

Had he not told her, in a tone and with a look that seemed to scorch her very flesh, that he had done with her for ever?

Well, at least he would be good to Tiff; and that was all she had to think of henceforth—of Tiff, and of poor Dick.

And of Quentin?

The girl flushed painfully.

Yes, of Quentin too, for one more day at least.

People might say what they would, she would keep her promise.

Had he not given her his heart and soul? Was he not prepared to commit any folly for her sake?

Surely it was not too much to give him a few waltzes in return, since that was all that lay in her power to do!

Madame Du Mottay came into her room as soon as she got home, to scold her for being late, and to insist upon her lying down until dinner-time.

"We are going to dine early and dress afterwards," she explained.

"Then, with a strong cup of tea, we shall be fresh, toilette and spirits, for the fray. As for me, in the certainty that Mrs. Masserene cannot come, I am only too happy! I feel now that the ball will be a complete success!"

Accordingly a somewhat informal dinner was spread in the hall, the only place that could be spared for the purpose, and partaken of somewhat hastily by Mr. Beaufoy's guests—the women in tea-gowns, the men in shooting-coats.

There was a good deal of laughter and flirtation during the meal, which had somewhat of a picnic flavor; and, even with the all important business of dressing in prospect, Madame Du Mottay and the ladies were sorry when it was time to tear themselves away.

Ninon lingered until the last moment, leaning over the balusters and talking in a low voice to Quentin, by whose side she had sat during dinner.

She was flushed, animated, sparkling. Brian, looking at her as she at length nodded a good-bye to his brother and ran lightly up the stairs, asked himself whether that were indeed the same woman who had lain last night pale and lifeless upon his breast, whose hair he had kissed, the throbbing of whose awakening heart he had felt against his own.

It was only last night; and now, he thought, not all the width of the world, not a century of time, could divide them more utterly than they were divided now.

She was very late in entering the ball-room.

Brian saw that Quentin was restlessly watching the door until she should appear. And when at last she came in, both of the brothers were struck to the heart by the girl's look.

The transient flush had died out of her cheeks again, leaving her as white as the gown she wore—the pretty old Dinard gown that seemed woven of shimmering pearls; but her blue eyes were glittering like two beautiful jewels, her sweet lips smiling; she had a white rose in her black hair.

There was about her a melancholy grace, a fragile charm, that are not to be described—but that both men felt keenly, each in his own way.

Looking at her, Quentin said to himself wildly that there was nothing in the world a man would not do, or sacrifice, or attain, in order to win her love.

He believed her of course to be engaged to his brother; but how was he to struggle any longer against the conviction that she was utterly restless, dissatisfied, miserable? He hated himself for the fierce joy that was taking possession of him as he began dimly to realize that it was not in Brian's power—master though he was of the Priory and fifteen thousand a year—to make her otherwise.

He was not revolted by the thought that, if this were true, Ninon was deliberately selling herself for a name and a position. Did not women do it every day in this world?

And who should blame them?

Life was so hard for women; men were so cruel towards them, so selfish, so unmanly—and what hope was there for Ninon, with her face and her unhappy home, but a good marriage?

But, if he had been the heir instead of Brian, would she be breaking her heart, poor child, as she was doing now, slowly, but surely?

With what other man had she ever been so happy, so untroubled, so unsympathetic, as with him, penniless though he was?

He looked at her now.

She was laughing, and gaily parrying poor dazzled Sir Harry's eager speeches.

Quentin felt with a kind of passion of jealousy, that every smile and careless word she gave the Squire were stolen from him. He crossed the room hurriedly.

Half a dozen men were crowding about her and begging for dances.

She laughed at them all as she had laughed at Sir Harry.

"You can divide the dances between you," she declared gaily.

"I will be strictly impartial."

"Oh, Miss Masserene!" in eager chorus, but she held up a little finger.

"All but the waltzes"—impressively.

"They are promised already."

She flashed a bright look at Quentin.

She was carrying his flowers, he saw.

She might have worn a dozen boquets that night, if she had wished, so many had been sent her by her adorers; but she had put them all aside for his.

A few minutes later Mr. Beaufoy saw her whirling round the room for the first time in Quentin's arms.

To Brian the ball was one long misery. The girl's recklessness throughout the evening was absolutely startling.

Even Madame Du Mottay was a little shocked, and begged her once in a whisper, as Ninon passed by, to be more careful.

The Duchess, she added, was hourly becoming more rigid, and she was afraid that illustrious lady might turn into a petrifaction, a personification of outraged propriety—and become an unpleasant fixture at the Priory.

"It is not my fault if Quentin's step suits mine better than any other man's," declared Ninon, with a wilful shrug of the shoulders.

"I am afraid the Duchess would not accept the excuse," urged Florry, making a grimace.

"Unfortunately, it is too evident that you are not in a position to judge of that, since you have danced with no one but Quentin. However, I only say, 'Take care!'"

Ninon laughed, and put her hand again upon Quentin's shoulder.

She was perfectly conscious of the disapproval that was being expressed on many of the matrons' faces around her.

The significant glances that were exchanged acted only as goads urging her on into further follies.

When she was not waltzing with Quentin, she was hiding from her other baffled partners, and sitting out dance after dance with him in all sorts of secluded corners.

It was not surprising that people should stare when they emerged again from their retreat, again to waltz together.

"Ninon, you have gone far enough!" whispered Florry, no longer smiling. "I forbid you to dance with Quentin again."

"Very well," said the girl meekly. "I will tell him—but really I don't see what we have done to deserve so much flattering attention from everybody.

"I have not romped through the Lancers, or laughed loud, like the Duchess's own daughters.

"Why doesn't she freeze them a little? It is quite their turn."

"My dear child, you are not a Duchess's daughter," returned Madame Du Mottay, with significance; "and Brian is looking as black as thunder.

"For Heaven's sake, be reasonable"

"I am not to dance with you again," said Ninon, shrugging her shoulders, when Quentin came again to claim her.

"Luckily Florry did not say anything about sitting out.

"Take me somewhere where it is cool."

Without a word, he led her across the long suite of drawing-rooms, and through the last of all, the one adjoining the picture gallery.

As he laid his hand upon the *portiere*, Ninon shrank involuntarily and drew back a step.

"Oh, not in there!" she said hurriedly. "I—I think it is draughty"—then, biting her lip, and again shrugging her shoulders, she passed through under his arm, and the heavy curtain fell to behind them.

The gallery was entirely empty.

Quentin and Ninon had not stood there together since the night of their escapade. They were both conscious of the fact. And Ninon remembered, with a quick pang that she tried to ignore, that the long moonbeam that was falling now across the middle of the dimly-lit room was lighting up Denis Beaufoy's sarcastic smile and dark constraining eyes.

She stood still, as if rooted to the spot, and felt as if nothing on earth could induce her to pass the picture.

Quentin, for his part, was looking at her—at her lips, and the flowers that rose and fell with her hurried breathing; and, suddenly losing all control over himself, he went mad for a moment, and seized the girl in his arms, covering her face with passionate kisses.

"Quentin!" she panted, bewildered, startled, indignant, when he released her as suddenly, white with shame for his wild outburst of feeling; and at the same moment they both saw that they were no longer alone.

A man was standing at the further door of the gallery, and looking at them with eyes full of incredulous horror.

It was Dick Strong.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

WHEN Dick arrived, bronzed, eager, happy, at the cottage, it was in the full expectation of finding Ninon there to meet him.

He had felt sure that somehow or other his mother and Mary would contrive this great delight for him.

But there were only the kind, familiar faces to greet him, and Tiffany, who was already beginning to look quite a sedate little maiden in her first long gowns, and with her ruddy rebellious locks braided and reduced to order by Mary's clever fingers.

Poor Dick reproached himself secretly for the blank sense of disappointment that seemed to swallow up every other feeling, even on the first evening of his return.

His mother's tremulous joy, Mary's sweet and steadfast smiles, no longer satisfied him, as of old.

The pretty drawing-room, bright with Miss Hawthorn's work, and sweet with her music, seemed strangely dull, and decidedly empty.

Old Bevis looked wistfully at his master's pre-occupied face, and from him to Mistress Mary, and felt there was something amiss.

It was not like the bygone joyful homecomings.

But what, he thought sadly, could an old dog do to help it, except indeed to rub his shaggy old head against Mistress Mary's white hand, and so remind her that, come what might, she could always depend on him for sympathy and protection?

Mary returned the caress so cheerfully that her old friend's heart was considerably lightened.

"You know, Bevis," she whispered, stooping down as she was crossing the hall after dinner, and putting her arms round the dog's neck—"you know he is thinking of Ninon; and you and I would have it otherwise, would we?"

Bevis gave a somewhat doubtful wag of his tail.

"I mean," Mary said, "now that we know he is in love with her, and that they are soon to be married.

"If you and I were to fret all day long, it would not alter that in the least, would it?

"And we would not be so selfish as to alter it if we could.

"And surely, at this time of our lives, you and I are not going to be disloyal to the master, are we, or to think of our own happiness at the cost of his?"

That appeal settled it.

Bevis thumped loudly on the floor with tail, and barked.

He was again entirely of one mind with Mistress Mary.

If she could look so brightly, and smile so sweetly, and talk so cheerfully, it certainly did not become him to put on melancholy airs, no matter how much he might regret the course events had taken.

"That's right!" said Mary, giving him another squeeze with her pretty, trembling arms.

"And now we will go into the drawing-room and be jolly.

"We are not very proud; but, after all, we do consider our dignity a little bit, dear old Bevis, and we would rather die than let Dick know that for five minutes after he came back we were—well, just a little bit upset.

"But it's all over now.

"It is not the old Dick, anyway, who has come home to us, but Ninon's affianced husband."

Bevis expressed his entire comprehension of the situation, and proceeded to make himself, in his lumbering old way, as agreeable as possible in the drawing-room.

He astonished Tiff by getting up bodily on to her lap.

He was a great deal too big to be nursed, and had to tuck his hind legs under him in a most precarious and uncomfortable fashion—and by attempting while there to lick her face.

"Did you ever see such a dear old goose of a dog!" Tiff cried, laughing, and giving him a hug.

Bevis turned his eyes towards Mary in an affectionate way.

"What do you think of that for frivolity and cheerfulness?" he seemed to say.

"And who would suspect me of having a heavy heart under my old gray coat, if you please?"

And then, feeling that he could no longer trespass on Tiffany's kindness, he got down again as quickly as possible, and, after having played rather awkwardly for some moments with Mrs. Strong's ball of pink wool, considered that he had now proved the hilarity of his sentiments beyond all doubt, and was at liberty to take up his usual place for the rest of the evening on the hem of Mrs. Hawthorne's blue gown.

From Tiffany Dick heard that evening all that she could tell him about his darling.

She told him, too, the story of her own banishment to the house at Batignolles, and of her rescue by Mr. Beaufoy, and how Ninon's cousin was going to send her to school.

"She is very good friends with the Beaufoy's, then?" Dick said, seemingly well pleased.

"She has not been altogether without protection since her cousins came to Marybridge?"

"No."

Tiff shook her head dubiously.

"Madame du Mottay has been very nice to her, of course.

"But she does not get on very well with Brian, I am sorry to say; and I'm sure I don't know why, for he is awfully nice and kind.

"Isn't he Mary?"

"Indeed, I think he is," Mary answered, looking up from her embroidery with a smile.

But Dick was not interested to any great extent in the subject of Mr. Beaufoy's good qualities.

He was hungering for more news of his beautiful love.

His mother's assurance that she had tried her very best to induce Mrs. Masserene to let Ninon come to them again, only half satisfied him.

Indeed he was so restless, so absent all the evening, as he sat with his womankind about the fire, that Mrs. Strong herself bade him, with a rather sad little smile, go down to Marybridge on the morrow, and see Ninon without delay.

"She knows you were expected daily," she added.

"Mr. Beaufoy carried her the news a few days ago.

And somewhat ashamed of himself, but unable to resist the temptation, Dick devoted the next day to various business arrangements, and in the evening, just as the three women at the cottage sat down to dinner alone, he put himself into the last train for Marybridge.

How well he remembered the last time he had stood on that platform, when Ninon had said good-bye to him with tears in her great blue eyes, and sacred promises upon her quivering lips!

And she had been true to those promises, Heaven bless her!

Dick had been conscious of a sense of relief in Tiffany's statement that Ninon had not got on well with Brian Beaufoy.

It was not—Heaven forbid—that he could doubt the woman who had given herself to him.

But in his heart of hearts he had always had a vague, uneasy jealousy of the master of the Priory.

His position, his relationship, his opportunities, were all so many points in his favor, Dick knew; and what man could resist the beauty and the charm of Ninon Masserene?

His heart swelled with a passion of gratitude when he remembered that, in spite of all these things, his darling had been true to him.

He had always known that she would be true.

Still, it was none the less sweet to have proof of her fidelity.

And, especially as the poor child had been compelled to keep their engagement a secret, Dick acknowledged generously

enough that the position had been a difficult one for her.

He knew something of the humiliations she was compelled daily to endure under her step-mother's roof, and he was resolved that during his next absence of a year, after which they were to be married, Ninon should stay with his mother.

He was prepared to have a battle royal with Mrs. Masserene on the subject, and had little doubt that he should win.

How could he go away again unless he was certain that his darling was safe from all such difficulties and annoyances as Tiff had hinted at?

Hitherto he had yielded to Ninon's wish for secrecy; but now that Tiffany's future had been made safe and happy, now that there was a definite prospect of their marriage, he hoped to persuade her into thinking as he did, and into accepting his mother's protection until the happy day came when he himself would have the right to take care of her.

He arrived at Marybridge about ten o'clock, and had some difficulty in securing a bed at the Beaufoy Arms, the inn being full to overflowing, as the breathless landlady explained, on account of the ball at the Priory that night.

"Oh, there is a ball at the Priory?" he demanded quickly.

That meant of course that he was not to see Ninon until next day. The young man's face fell.

"Yes, sir, the grandest as has been given in these parts for years. The county people has driven over from far and near, and some of the gentleman, sir, has been obliged to take beds here for the night, seeing that they can't get back before morning, and that every room up at the House—so Mr. Burney says—is as full as it will hold."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Almost Sacrificed:

BY THE AUTHOR OF "BARBARA GRAHAM," "TWICE MARRIED," "MABEL MAY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

DR. FAIRFAX signed for her step-mother to leave the room; then he went to the bedside of his patient, and gently raising the young girl's head, he poured some cooling mixture, from a small flask he drew from his pocket, through the parched lips.

"There lie down and sleep, Clara," he said, gently.

"You are safe,—quite safe—and will soon be well if you remain quiet."

Clara murmured something half inaudible and then turned wearily on her pillow, and appeared to be sinking into unconsciousness that was at least better than the distressing, feverish restlessness of the previous hour.

When Mrs. Nugent's steps died away, Doctor Fairfax took the glass just placed on the table and held it to his lips.

A peculiar expression passed over his face as he did so.

Then he applied it to his nose, and once again let a drop pass his lips. He smiled gravely, and taking a phial from his pocket, poured the mixture into it, and carefully corked it.

As he placed the empty glass on the table, Mrs. Nugent again tapped at the door.

"I have ordered the housemaid to be at your orders, Doctor Fairfax. She came only last week, and it is scarcely likely that she will know her."

"Nor can she know any of the peculiarities of the young lady," he supplemented.

"Your choice is judicious, madame." And again he gave one of those strange looks that Mrs. Nugent could not meet without mingled anger and terror.

"Really, Doctor Fairfax, when I consider that you were a stranger to me but twelve hours since," she began.

"The fact that I am an intimate friend of the dear ward and adopted son of your late husband, must be my excuse for the course I deem it right to take," he said. "Once more, madame, I tell you that I am ready to answer for all I do to those who have a right to demand an explanation."

And with a calm and courteous bow he closed the door, as a signal to the lady to retire from the neighborhood of his patient, while the stout form of the country housemaid appeared from behind the ample skirts of the lady of Temple Nugent, and obeyed his invitation to enter ere he shut the door.

After a time all was perfectly still, and the hours went slowly on, while Clara lay all unconscious of the friendly face that watched over her, of the kindly cares that were lavished on her during that long, dark, wearisome night.

* * * * * *

Margaret Nugent sat in her boudoir, listening eagerly for the faintest sound of approaching carriage wheels.

At last it came, a dull, grating roll, and then the horses dashed up to the steps.

The door of the vehicle opened, and a dark, middle-aged, sleek gentleman stepped out and hastened up the staircase to Mrs. Nugent's private room, as if well convinced of his welcome.

After a slight tap he entered without waiting for permission.

"You will be surprised at my early summons, Doctor Shelby," said Mrs. Nugent, after the usual civilities had been passed; "but Clara is ill again, and I need your aid."

"Ill again!" echoed the doctor. "When did this attack begin?"

"Only last night; and it happened, unfortunately, that a physician was staying in the house, and insisted on prescribing for her. But I gave her your medicine in spite of him."

"Quite right, he said, hurriedly.

"But did he—did the doctor see it?"

"Yes; but——"

And the lady whispered a few words that made the doctor chuckle with delight.

"Very, very good. Yes, quite right, he could not know her constitution, and any fresh remedies might kill her, especially with her hereditary tendency."

Mrs. Nugent paused for some minutes, as if to collect her thoughts, and then, looking straight at her companion, said—

"Doctor Selby, I have never failed you in your difficulties.

"My check-book would show that you have never found me a niggard patroness. I know that you are in urgent need now. I know that certain ruin and disgrace are threatening you. Do you not wish to avoid both?"

The doctor's face grew painfully white, and his eyes lost their shining calm light and blazed with a sudden terror.

"I—I really do not understand you, Mrs. Nugent," he stammered.

"Yes, you do, Doctor Selby.

"You understand me well—perfectly well. And, what is more, I can tell you yet more plainly what the danger is that threatens you, and from which it must be indeed an unforeseen chance that can save you."

She bent forward, and again whispered a few words in his ear.

He shivered and started back from the hissing lips that nearly touched him.

"Are you a fiend," he exclaimed, "a mocking fiend?".

"No, only a woman with some tact and wisdom," she said, "and what is more, with determination also.

"It may be, Doctor Selby, that there is more at stake than you or your petty affairs, though the danger in which you stand is apt to become rather more grave than is becoming to a respectable M. D.

"But I have no time to speak of that just now.

"What I have to say is this—Help me, and I will save you.

"Is it a bargain?"

"But in what way?" he asked, his voice trembling, in spite of his utmost to keep it firm.

"I will soon explain what is the service I want if you agree to the bargain.

"A check and perfect oblivion I promise on my side, if success attend your exertions for me."

He paused for a moment. His eyes met hers shrinkingly.

"Minutes are precious," she said. "Are you decided?"

"I—I can do all but one thing," he stammered. "You will not ask me that?"

She gazed contemptuously at him.

"Fool! It is a word that daunts you? Have you not in real fact almost carried out all that I now wish consummated?

"A word from me would be your ruin. I will never speak that word if you obey me but this once.

"Then you can leave your miserable drugs and prescriptions and go away for ever, where neither you nor I shall ever meet.

"Do you understand?"

Doctor Selby did understand too well, and for some minutes he could not bring himself to speak the word that would for ever fill him with remorse.

But there was no alternative.

Mrs. Nugent's cold eyes were upon him. He saw the glitter in their cruel depths, the compression of the firm lips.

All the delicacy of the woman had disappeared; in its place was the determination of a taskmaster.

"As you will," he said—"as you will, Mrs. Nugent; that is, I have no wish to thwart any plans of yours—and you have ever been liberal, and I have ever been a very, very unfortunate man——"

"You will have no reason to complain of your fortune if you will listen to me, Doctor Selby.

"As soon as this matter is carried to a successful issue, your future will be secure. Listen."

She approached the doctor's ear and spoke for some minutes in a low and rapid tone of voice.

The words seemed to fall dead and cold on his heart as he listened.

A shiver came over his frame as the plans were unfolded, but no remorse, no trepidation seized the relentless woman at his side.

Her resolution was taken; and she was not one to draw back after so many years of plotting and planning for her ends.

"You will do it?" she said.

"I will."

"Remember, all depends on your success. I shall measure the reward by the completeness of your success.

"Money enough to remove all your difficulties, and enable you to go elsewhere and begin fresh in prosperity and comfort, or a prison and disgrace—between these lies your choice.

"Do you understand?"

"I do. I shall obey your wishes. One minute, and I shall be ready."

He gathered himself up, as it were, for the coming crisis; and Mrs. Nugent could see the thoughtful and daring plotter of old times reappear with his reviving color and steadier mein.

"Now I am ready," he said.

"Fear nothing, Mrs. Nugent—I shall not fail you."

The lady did not fear.

She led the way to the invalid's chamber after a brief pause, during which the doctor disappeared for a few moments in a large closet which Mrs. Nugent called her "amateur housekeeper's room," whence he quickly emerged, and again signified his readiness to accompany his hostess.

They speedily arrived at the sick room, and Mrs. Nugent tapped softly at the door. Doctor Fairfax opened it.

"My dear Doctor Fairfax, I am so thankful. Our own doctor, who knows Clara's constitution so well, has just arrived. He will relieve you of much responsibility in prescribing for a stranger."

The gentleman bowed—one cringingly rather than courteously, the other defiantly rather than coldly.

"I feel sure I am almost needless in this case," said Doctor Selby; "but as I have attended Miss Nugent from childhood, and in a multitude of counsellors there is some safety.

"The present attack seems to be a more than usually severe one."

Doctor Fairfax had hesitated for a moment whether to permit the entrance of a fellow physician, but a sense of the injustice of such a step decided him, and he quietly drew back and permitted Doctor Selby to pass.

Mrs. Nugent stood waiting.

"I shall attend Doctor Selby's report here," she said; "painful as the exclusion may be, I will not insist on my right to enter Clara's sick room."

Doctor Fairfax bowed composedly, and, accepting the lady's proposal, closed the door behind himself and *confrere*.

After a short inspection of the still delirious patient, and a few whispered words of question and answer, the physicians left Mary in charge of the sufferer and went into the adjoining room.

"What is your opinion of Miss Nugent's case, Doctor Selby?" asked Doctor Fairfax, quietly.

The former shook his head.

"I need hardly tell you, my dear sir, that you do not know all that I do of the poor girl.

"Hereditary heart-disease and incipient insanity are terrible foes to fight with; for years I have found great difficulty in warding off the danger which threatens Miss Nugent."

Doctor Fairfax listened with immovable composure.

"If not impertinent, might I inquire the mode of treatment that you have adopted, Doctor Selby?"

"Oh, by all means—I quite agree with the idea—yes, certainly, there should be perfect confidence between professional men; only you will pardon my remarking that Mrs. Nugent has hitherto been perfectly satisfied with my treatment of her daughter's case."

"No doubt; but I have seen some novel treatment of diseases in India," remarked Dr. Fairfax, calmly.

"The natives have rather original ideas, and some excellent and novel medicines, which are at times very successful—powerful antidotes, for example, against poison, and singular agents on the nerves. I dare say you have never studied this branch of the subject, Doctor Selby."

"Oh, yes.

"I believe few practitioners have had as much experience in delicate cases as I have had, and more especially as regards mental affections.

"For instance, I had some time back two ladies of rank under my care, and happily managed to restore them in a perfectly sound state to their homes and families. The case of our patient in the next room closely resembles theirs—great excitability, violent irritation, unaccountable fancies and dislikes, with a delicate physical organization."

"Again may I ask what are your remedies for these maladies?"

"Extreme quite, absence of exertion or excitement, and an occasional course of composing medicine."

"Is it your deliberate opinion, Doctor Selby, that Miss Nugent suffers from heart-disease?"

"Certainly, and no wonder—her mother died of it."

"And that there are symptoms of mental disorder?"

"I fear so—indeed I may say I have little doubt upon the point."

"Do you happen to have any of the medicines you prescribe for Miss Nugent with you?

"I can scarcely presume to doubt their efficacy, since you have tried them so long and so frequently."

Doctor Fairfax's calm penetrating eyes were on the face of his brother physician, but so quiet and natural was the gaze that it was impossible to decide whether it had any especial meaning.

Yet the hands shook slightly that produced a bottle, and there was a constrained air in the forced smile that accompanied the action.

"Yes; I seldom come to Temple Nugent unprovided with the medicines that I know are generally wanted.

"But Mrs. Nugent's notes are usually so graphic that I can pretty well understand the state of affairs."

"Then I am to understand that this is not the first attack of this kind?"

Doctor Selby hesitated.

"Perhaps the present one is more severe, which is natural as Miss Nugent grows older, but it is of the same character."

"Then this medicine has proved efficacious?

"You have administered it before?"

Certainly Doctor Selby was an angel of patience and long suffering.

Even the somewhat inquisitorial nature of the examination he was undergoing at the hands of a younger practitioner could not move his natural sweetness and serenity.

"I think Miss Nugent's recovery has been a sufficient guarantee of its success," he replied, half reproachfully.

Doctor Fairfax bowed deferentially.

"I can have nothing to say against that," he observed, stretching out his hand for the bottle.

Doctor Selby's hand was cold and trembling as he gave it into his companion's grasp.

But the circumstance appeared to pass unnoticed by Doctor Fairfax, who first applied the uncorked medicine to his nose, and then, replacing the stopper, became abstracted in thought.

His head was turned toward the door, in the attitude of listening.

Some minutes of anxious silence thus passed, and the nerves of both practitioners appeared strung to the utmost.

At last Doctor Fairfax spoke.

"Time is precious, Doctor Selby. Shall we administer this medicine at once?"

The eyes of the person spoken to glittered.

"Certainly—each moment increases the danger," was the swift reply.

As he spoke, the sound of footsteps was heard.

Doctor Fairfax instantly walked to the door, and opened it to admit Alwynne Compton.

Doctor Selby's cheek's grew a deep, dull red as the new-comer entered.

"Doctor Selby," said Doctor Fairfax, "let me introduce to you Mr. Alwynne Compton, the adopted son and ward of the late Mr. Nugent, and heir of one of the richest men in Calcutta.

"Alwynne," continued the speaker, turning to his friend, "Doctor Selby was about to prescribe one of the powerful remedies that he has found so efficacious in Miss Nugent's fever attack.

"You are just in time to witness my utter and distinct protest against such a proceeding."

As he spoke he grasped the bottle in his hand, and placed himself with his back towards the door and his face towards his fellow-physician.

Doctor Selby quickly recovered from the unexpected attack.

"Doctor Fairfax, this extremely unprofessional and ungentlemanly conduct will be commented on and resented as it deserves. I have shown you every forbearance and a respect that your interference scarcely deserves; but this passes patience.

"I in my turn distinctly forbid any further meddling on your part with a patient placed under my care by her guardian and lawful protector.

"Mrs. Nugent will very quickly settle the point in dispute, and the profession will unanimously support me if it is needful that the circumstances should become known."

"Are you sure of that, Doctor Selby?" asked Alwynne.

"And are you certain that you would wish the circumstances to be known?

"Or are you at all doubtful about the result?"

Doctor Selby's eyes glanced furtively towards the bottle in his *confrere's* hand, but for the moment at least he dared make no effort to obtain it.

"No, Mr. Compton, I am not," he replied fiercely.

"Doctor Fairfax is acting in defiance of every rule of courtesy and professional etiquette, and I shall at once refer the matter to Mrs. Nugent.

"She will decide between us." And he made a step or two towards the door.

But Doctor Fairfax had placed himself against it, and Alwynne Compton quietly laid his hand on the speaker's arm.

"Stay, Doctor Selby, if you please.

"There is at least one point to settle ere you leave this room, and, if you are wise, you will give your best assistance and offer no resistance

"Attempt to quit this apartment without satisfying us by every means in your power that can atone for the past, and all hope of mercy and forbearance at our hand is vain." And as he spoke Alwynne pointed sternly to a chair near the fire-place.

Doctor Selby made a spring towards the door of the invalid's room, but it was locked on the inside.

Doctor Fairfax smiled.

"Be content, Doctor Selby; the patient about whom you are so much concerned is well cared for, and has no need of your professional services.

"I would advise you to take the advice of my friend, and be thankful that any means of escape from the consequences of your guilty connivance in an infamous plot is vouchsafed to you."

"The plot appears on your side, gentlemen," said the prisoner, faintly attempting to assume an indignant look and tone of innocence.

"This is past a jest and past forbearance; I demand an explanation of such conduct."

"You shall have it," rejoined Doctor Fairfax, quietly; "and, as a member of the profession which you disgrace, I pledge myself to offer you every reparation and apology in my power if you can disprove the facts I deeply regret to know.

"Mr. Compton, you are my authority for the steps I have taken, but I scarcely believe that you are prepared for the result of my investigations.

"The bottle I hold in my hand contains to my all but certain belief a drug that would be dangerous to any living being—in Miss Nugent's case it would be fatal—and I much mistake if it does not prove to be mixed with a poison more subtle, but not less certain, which I fear has been administered to Miss Nugent more than once, to judge from the symptoms that I have observed."

As he spoke he held the bottle towards Alwynne.

The next instant Doctor Selby had sprung

forward with the sudden bound of a tiger, and nearly wrenched it from his grasp, but Doctor Fairfax was a powerful man, and too wary to be surprised.

He held the bottle with a firm grasp with one hand, and with the other threw his guilty assailant from him, while Alwynne laid his hand on the bell.

"Listen, Doctor Selby," he said: "you can scarcely hope to escape two men like Fairfax and myself; still, I do not choose to risk Miss Nugent's recovery by any noise or disturbance so near her room, and therefore I have to inform you that the slightest attempt on your part to play falsely will bring those who will at once prevent your escaping justice or obtaining mercy at our hands.

"I am in possession of the outlines of the infamous plans that have been laid, so I insist on your full and candid confession of all that you know in the matter."

The guilty man sat cowering and shaking under the stern gaze of his accuser.

He was between two dangers of almost equal magnitude, and certain ruin awaited him in any case.

"I cannot give it," he said, his lips quivering pitiably, and his ashen cheeks becoming each moment more corpse-like.

"Do not ask me.

"It was not my fault—it was not my doing.

"Why should I suffer?"

Alwynne looked contemptuously at him. "Poor craven," he said, "I believe you.

"You have been the agent, if not the victim, of a far more unscrupulous will, a far stronger nature, than your own.

"But you have to deal with one whom you will find more determined still; and if you have any pity for yourself, you will not hesitate."

"But I dare not confess," he said—I dare not."

And a strong shudder came over him that was a pledge for his truth.

Alwynne could have almost pitied the wretched man had he been less guilty.

"Listen," he said.

"If you are in the power of the unscrupulous woman who employed you in this infamous scheme, I will protect you.

"One of the conditions of her own escape from punishment shall be that you are permitted to enjoy the wretched remainder of life without outward punishment. But all will depend on your perfect candor—your full confession.

"I give you five minutes to decide. If you have come to no decision by then I shall at once give you up to justice."

"No, no!

"I have decided.

"I will, I will!" he cried.

"It was but my own danger that induced me to listen to her.

"I had got into her power; and I could not, I dared not refuse.

"That was it.

"I didn't wish it—poor young thing—I didn't wish it!"

"And you preferred your own miserable life, your own safety, to that of a young and helpless and innocent girl!" exclaimed Alwynne in disgust.

"Cowardly wretch, he deserves no mercy at our hands!"

"But you promised it," he cried—"you promised it;"

"Yes, and I will keep my promise, poor craven," said Alwynne, "but as I would to a reptile that would find its punishment by writhing hopelessly and miserably under the crushing weight of the stone above it. Fairfax, will you take down this miserable man's confession?"

"One minute," said Doctor Fairfax—"I will return instantly;" and he disappeared into the patient's room, from which he soon returned with a look of peculiar brightness. "All is right, I see," he observed. "Now I am ready."

And he drew paper and pens towards him—ready for the task.

Alwynne asked but one or two questions as the stream burst forth that had been so long pent up in the guilty breast.

Either the wretched man was anxious to win the favor and protection of his companions by the completeness of his confession, or he desired to be revenged on his hard task-mistress, or some spark of remorse still lingered in his hardened guilty heart, whatever it was, the effect was the same; and the most zealous friends of Clara Nugent could scarcely have desired a more full and entire proof of the long and cunningly-devised plot that had been formed and carried out consistently for many years.

Alwynne's eyes flashed and his blood was stirred as he listened; but he restrained the tide of indignation that well-nigh mastered him till he had been made acquainted with the secrets of the lady of Temple Nugent and her guilty and weak accomplice.

Doctor Fairfax wrote on unmoved, as if merely inditing an ordinary letter; but there was a world of scorn in the look that he bent on the wretched, eager criminal when his task was done.

"I have returned to my native country," he said, "to find that a noble profession can be degraded by one of the basest villians that ever wore a coat.

"Still, there have been such in the Law and the Church, and why not in Physic?" And with this philosophical observation he held out his pen to the white-faced shivering criminal.

"There," he said—"sign it, and Mr. Compton will witness it, and then you will have done your part for the present."

"But you will want nothing more, will you?" he said.

"I may go now?"

"Not yet," answered Alwynne sternly.

"Remember my conditions.

"You must await my pleasure and obey my orders, or I will have you in the only place where you ought to be," and the significant look and gesture conveyed the full meaning of his words to the conscience-stricken man.

"I will, I will," he said—"only do not be long.

"I cannot bear this terrible suspense."

Alwynne's only reply was to beckon him from the room, and the two went noiselessly to the adjoining corridor, on which Mrs. Nugent's and Eleanor's apartments opened. He opened one of the doors and motioned to Selby to enter.

The apartment was one that had been formerly used as a nursery in the Nugent family, and the window was effectually protected by iron gratings.

Alwynne saw this, and that if he turned the key on his prisoner he would be cut off from any chance of escape.

And therefore, without needless cautions or promises, he closed the door on him, locked it, and repaired to Mrs. Nugent's boudoir.

His gentle tap was followed by a cordial "Come in," but the start and change of features that followed his appearance proved that the admission thus freely granted had been intended for another.

"I thought it was Doctor Selby," she said, quickly recovering herself, "come to give me news of our dear Clara.

"You have indeed been rapid in your return, Mr. Compton."

"It was necessary, madam, quite necessary," he rejoined, sternly, "if I wished to save a life very dear to me, and which will, I trust, be spared to make the happiness of many.

"But it was too soon for you, as I can well believe, and I pray Heaven that it may have been soon enough for her."

"You speak in riddles, Mr. Compton," she said, haughtily.

"Clara's two physician's would scarcely be flattered by your remark."

"Possibly, madam; but of that hereafter, I have neither time nor inclination to go into such useless quibblings now.

"I am come to warn you, Mrs. Nugent, that you are at last completely unmasked and defeated.

"I know all, and I am prepared to act on the knowledge."

The lady's lips turned livid, but her eyes were as undaunted as ever.

"You use strange language, Mr. Compton—language that I can hardly brook. I must charitably suppose that it is due to an extra allowance of wine."

"You do me injustice, madame. But, if you are dull, I will enlighten you by telling you a tale that you perhaps little dream is known to any but yourself and only one other."

Alwynne paused for a few moments and then began—

"Many years ago two girls of different ages but nearly related in blood were living near to each other in a country neighborhood; but, though related, the position of the two was very different.

"Margaret Vincent was the child of a poor countryclergyman, and Constance Merchant was the only child of the richest commoner within some distance.

"Near the same place resided the son of the once celebrated physician of the neighborhood, Francis Compton.

"These three were as intimate as close vicinity in a country place could make them, with all the opportunities that rides and drives, walks and picnics, and summer evenings could afford; and some of the usual results followed.

"Francis fell in love with the beautiful Constance, and Margaret Vincent cherished a strong—what shall I call it?—predilection for him.

"Constance was believed to return his love, but her father's strict counsels and his earnest pleadings prevailed with the dutiful, gentle daughter.

"She crushed back her love and married the wealthy owner of Temple Nugent.

"Then Margaret's hopes rose once more, only to be entirely dashed to the ground. Francis did not love the proud, bad-natured girl, and soon afterwards left the place to win fortune elsewhere.

"And then Margaret swore to have revenge—if possible on both, but certainly on her whom she believed the cause of her disappointment."

Mrs. Nugent listened as if in a dream, her eyes fixed on Alwynne with a spellbound and dreamy air

He went on—

"And then came the usual changes. Mrs. Vincent died and Margaret married a man in a very different position from that of Mr. Nugent, albeit one of worth and probity. Then kindly Constance did not forget her relative, nor the old connection between them in a time of trouble; and on an evil day for herself and her child she brought her relative into the neighborhood of Temple Nugent; when Alwynne, the old lover's son, was now residing as a ward of his father's ancient love.

"Soon after this the evil spirit entered Margaret Le Grande, and step by step she arranged and carried out one of the blackest plots ever devised by woman against the innocent.

"Mr. Le Grande died, and his widow began to think that Constance's end might well be expiated.

"The poor lady was taught to believe that extreme debility and weakness of nerve betokened heart disease.

"The conviction worked and prayed on her, and at last a rupture of one of the delicate fibres of the heart led to the belief that the cause of death was what had been reported."

"It is false!" interrupted Mrs. Nugent, suddenly.

"How dare you!

"It is false.

"Constance did not die of a malady of the heart.

"It was known—proved."

"I know what passed, madame.

"I do not say that any really unfair means were employed, but there are many ways of hastening death without resorting to poison."

And Alwynne emphasized the word.

"Well, to be brief madame, Constance died, and then the way was clear for her rival.

"In a year's time she was the wife of Howard Nugent, in less than two the mistress of Temple Nugent and the guardian of its heiress—blacker still, a codicil to Mr. Nugent's will had been drawn which gave the reversion of the property to Margaret Le Grande's daughter, failing Clara Nugent's life. How that arrangement was secured no one but yourself, Mrs. Nugent, can say—I know it was not the free, spontaneous act of my guardian."

The lady sat gazing at the young man with disturbed eyes.

"Now comes the darkest and most complicated part of my story.

"Mrs. Nugent took charge of Clara, and from that moment an ingenious scheme for her destruction was begun.

"The child was deprived of all that was healthful, invigorating, and cheering. A mode of life that fostered every latent malady and weakened the young frame was carried on, under pretense of kind and maternal care.

"And this was mingled with the most depressing taunts and galling unkindness that could well be devised for so delicate a nature. Yet Clara lived on. The vital principle was so strong within her, and God's providence watched over the oppressed orphan.

"Then Alwynne Compton came back. Why, Mrs. Nugent, when I left here, ten years since, an obscure and comparatively poor lad, you would scarcely have permitted my addresses to your daughter had I desired to offer them.

"But now I am wealthy, and Eleanor no longer in her first youth. And again Clara stands in the way.

"She always occupies the heritage you covet, and you quickly foresaw that she would attract and win the heart, or rather the hand, that you covet for your daughter. Surely Satan must have inspired you with the infamous scheme—first to occupy my mind with an idea that the poor girl suffered from two terrible incurable maladies, and then, when that appeared likely to fail, to turn the supposed maladies into a real and violent attack of illness, and to accelerate and aggravate that illness of poison."

Mrs. Nugent shrieked—a low suppressed shriek.

"Oh, no, no!" she answered. "It is false, false, false!"

And she clasped her hands in her wild agony.

"It is true, Mrs. Nugent.

"I have indisputable proof of it—proof in the very medicine you would yourself have administered to poor Clara, and in the confession of your wretched accomplice, or rather agent."

"It is false, I say—false!" she cried, growing ashy pale.

"The wretched man of whom you speak is alone responsible for the medicines he gives.

"If he has erred by mistake or wilfulness, let him bear the responsibility.

"I know nothing of it. You cannot prove it—you know you cannot."

"Foolish, wicked woman," said Alwynne, sternly, "it is only for the sake of the name you so unworthily bear that I spare you the exposure and disgrace you merit.

"Tell me who mixed the draught that by the good providence of the Almighty was saved from being administered by your own hands last night.

"Tell me who threatened the wretched agent of your crime with exposure and certain ruin if he resisted your will."

"Slanderous wretch, he shall suffer for all this!" she exclaimed, furiously.

"Do you know that he is not only utterly and hopelessly immersed in debt, but that he has forged my name to bills of large amount, which are now in my possession. I shall exact punishment for this infamous slander."

"For this revelation of the truth you mean, madame," said Alwynne, calmly.

"You will do nothing of the kind, Mrs. Nugent.

"If you breathe one word in respect of the unhappy man's misdeeds, the next hour will see your own crime published to the world, and the utmost rigor of the law displayed in visiting your guilt as it deserves. If Clara lives, you will stand charged with the crime of attempting her life by poison, after a long course of lingering persecution that might well have worn away her health and energy.

"If she dies"—and the voice faltered—"the charge will still be more serious, and I warn you that in such a case nothing but the most solemn promise will restrain me from pursuing her murderer to the very last breath."

And a stern, rigid look came over his fine features.

"Eleanor, Eleanor—where is Eleanor?" cried the guilty woman, terrified.

"She will plead for me—she will disprove these wicked slanders."

"For the sake of her comparative youth and the years still before her, I hope she has not heard of this last and deepest crime; but I know that she has shared in the cruel and unjust treatment that has been but a slow murder.

"In pity to her and yourself, leave your daughter out of the fearful web in which you are involved."

She covered her face with her hands; her form rocked to and fro, her hands were clasped together in agony.

A suppressed moan escaped her.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Scientific and Useful.

MOSQUITOES.—Camphorated glycerine will be found most serviceable to put on exposed parts to keep the mosquitoes from biting you.

PACKING.—It is said that steam and air-tight rubber packing may be made by brushing it over with a solution of powdered resin in about ten times its weight of water. The packing is ready in about four weeks.

EYE-MEASURER.—An instrument has just been invented called an optometor, or eye-measurer, by which the depth of the human eye can accurately be gauged, and glasses adjusted to the sight, without having to try them on, thus dispensing with that disagreeable task. Although the idea is ingenious, its construction is extremely simple.

NEW GLASS.—A Vienna chemist has made a new glass, which seems to be an interesting production. Its composition is not given, but it is said to contain neither silex, potash, soda, lime, nor borax. It is perfectly clear and transparent, and can be cut and polished, while it is reported to be more brilliant in appearance than common crystal. It is completely insoluble in water, and is not affected by fluoric acid.

ODORS.—Physicians have long regarded odors as due to small particles thrown off by the odoriferous substances, but the fact that some substances emit powerful odors for a great length of time without appreciable loss of weight makes the theory unsatisfactory. Light and heat are now explained as modes or forms of motion. This view is known as the undulatory theory, and it has been suggested lately that the phenomena of odors may be best accounted for by the same hypothesis.

OLD METHOD OF FIGHTING SHIPS.—At Trafalgar the guns of the ships were depressed, in order that the shot fired at the enemy might not strike a friend on the other side. In more than one instance the boarding parties entered through lower deck ports, and the muzzles of the broadside guns actually touched, yet the ships which had been in such close embrace remained capable of manœuvring and fighting. No such result would be possible under present conditions. A blow from the ram fairly delivered, a couple of torpedoes successfully exploded, and the Inflexible might, in an instant, be converted into a helpless wreck.

RAIN-MEASURER.—A new measurer of rain-falls externally resembles a small upright clock-case, and is internally composed of a cylindrical vase, in which is a peculiar float, having attached thereto an upright rod, terminating in a delicate spring pencil or pointer. A drum, on which a suitably-prepared diagram is fixed, turns by means of a clock attachment, so that as water enters the vase a curved line is traced on the sheet, showing the height to which the water attains at any given time. This machine is intended to be placed inside the observatory, and to be connected by means of a pipe with the collector outside. The registration of this instrument has the two great advantages of being constant and automatic.

Farm and Garden.

TOBACCO.—By vaporizing two quarts of tobacco-juice over a slow fire, Baron Rothschild's gardener, at Paris, destroys all the troublesome insects that may be contained in the hot-house in which the operation is performed. He considers the remedy infallible, and says it rarely injures the tenderest plants.

TO PROTECT FARM TOOLS.—An excellent preparation for the preservation of the iron work of farm implements, may be made by the slow melting together of six or eight parts of lard to one of resin, stirring till cool. This remains semi-fluid, always ready for use, the resin preventing rancidity, and supplying an air-tight film. Rubbed on a bright surface ever so thinly it protects and preserves the polish most effectually.

THE CULTIVATION OF CELERY.—Dwarf celery should always be planted on the level surface of the ground. The large varities may be grown in shallow trenches from four to six inches below the surface. Better success will be attained, and with less labor, by sowing the seed where the celery is to be grown, than by sowing in a seed-bed and transplanting the plants to shallow drills or trenches. The benefits arising from this method of culture are numerous.

TAR WATER.—One of the best and most effectual remedies for curculio on plum trees is to put a pailful of coal-tar in an old barrel, fill the barrel with water and stir it up. The tar will settle to the bottom and leave the water strongly scented with it. As soon as the plums have set take a garden pump and sprinkler and shower the trees with this tar water. After a heavy rain repeat it several times during the season if necessary. We believe the same medicine would prove an effective cure for currant worms, codelling moths and perhaps potato bugs, but for currant worms the application should be made as soon as the leaf-buds begin to open, as the eggs are laid very early in the spring.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

SIXTY-SECOND YEAR.

SATURDAY EVENING, MARCH 24, 1883.

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MAN AND WIFE.

To become a husband is as serious a matter to a man as it it for a woman to become a wife. Marriage is no child's play; it brings added care, trial, perplexity, vexation, and it requires a great deal of the happiness which legitimately springs out of it to make the balance heavy in its favor.

If you wish to live in harmonious union with your wife, start out with the avowed recognition of the fact that she is your companion and co-partner.

Marriage usually makes the wife neither of these. In many instances she sees less of her husband that before she married him. He comes, he goes, he reads, thinks, works, and under the stimulus of business, brings all his power and faculties to the surface, and is developed thereby—not always symmetrically, but vigorously—not always harmoniously, but with increasing power. Married men do not always shrivel up nor put on a look of premature age, but women frequently do; and it is very plain why they do.

Married women are shut up in houses, and their chief care is for things that have no inspiring influence. Their time is taken up in meeting the physical wants of their families—cooking, washing dishes, keeping the house in order, sewing, receiving company—not one of which has in it a tendency even to culture and elevation. Married women are devoted to the house, and this means a life of vexation and pettiness. Treat your wife exactly as you yourself would like to be treated if you had to live under her circumstances, and you will not go far wrong.

Do not entertain the silly notion that because she is of a different gender from your own that she is therefore different in her wants, feelings, qualities and powers. Do not be the victim of any social policy. Stand up bravely for the right, give your wife a chance to live, grow, and be somebody, and become something.

Try to be thoughtful, considerate and forbearing. You will have new duties, and they will bring new trials. Take good care of your health and hers. Be simple, both, in your habits; be careful in your expenditures; be industrious; if you keep good health and are frugal, blessings will come from your united love, and you will grow happier and better day by day as the years pass.

SANCTUM CHAT.

A CHRISTIAN minister said: "I was never of any use until I found out that God did not make me for a great man."

—

A FEW years ago associations known as "Bands of Mercy" were formed in England, the object of which was to inculcate and promote kindness to animals. They have achieved a great success, especially in teaching children to show kindness to the dumb creatures. The Earl of Shaftesbury is at the head of the organization

—

STATISTICS of a quail-hunt in Georgia, gathered by an Atlanta paper: The Marietta and North Georgia Road is the great route for quail-hunters. The other day there were $2,000 worth of dogs (cash valuation) in a baggage-car on that road, attended by $6,000 worth of negroes (old valuation). In the coach were $1,400 worth of guns, and $50 worth of hunters. On the return trip they had $5.80 worth of birds, and they ate a $20 lunch.

—

THE craze for monarchical customs, etc., among some of our millionaires is getting to be alarming. It is now quite a common thing to see the Queen of England's coat-of-arms emblazoned on the signs along Broadway and Fifth Avenue, New York, together with the words, "Hatter to the Queen," Tailor to the Queen," and it is a fact that the largest livery-stable firm in the above-named city has the coat-of-arms of the prince of Wales painted on all its carriages.

—

A SUCCESSFUL Western speculator hires a store in a thriving village, stocks it with showy but poor merchandise, and pretends that he means to establish a permanent business. At the end of a month or two he receives a telegram announcing the death of his father in New York, and urging him to come at once and look after the estate. Then he announces that he must sacrifice his goods, in order to get off as quickly as possible, and they are sold at auction at a good profit.

—

A MUSIC-LOVING Frenchman has left to a friend the curious legacy of a stall at the opera, to be annually paid for with the interest of a sum of money deposited for that purpose in the Bank of France. The immediate beneficiary of this bequest will probably enjoy it by proxy, as he cares not for music, and is deaf. At his death the stall passes to the directors of the Paris Conservatory of Music, and is to be given yearly as an additional reward to the student who gains the first prize.

—

A MILITARY man and a civil official fell out, at Rosenberg, West Prussia, and the former issued a challenge for a duel, but the latter replied: "As you are an expert with weapons, and I am not, I shall doubtless be killed. Still, I will fight if you will bind yourself to pay my family $1,500 a year during their lives, that being the income which would cease at my death." These terms were pronounced reasonable by the seconds, but the challenger would not agree to them, and so there was no duel.

—

A MAINE man has perfected an invention for starting the kitchen fire in the morning without getting out of bed. Before retiring he empties a scuttle of coal into the range, and then closes the dampers, so that there will be just draught enough to keep the fire from dying out. By an ingenious contrivance a wire connects with the dampers and runs along the walls up through the floor to the sleeping-room. When the man wakes he gives the wire a jerk, the dampers fly open, and in half an hour a brisk coal fire is burning.

—

A WELL-KNOWN, and wealthy London diner-out has published a little book on dinner-giving. His main points are: 1. Limit the number of guests to twelve or fourteen. 2. Keep the dining-room cool and well-ventilated. 3. Sit down to dinner at 8.30, without waiting for guests who may be absent. 4. Return to the drawing-room by 9.30 to 9.45. 5. Reduce the present number of dishes. If this were done, he says, dinners might be what they ought to be—from the materials to be collected in society—the most agreeable reunions in the world.

—

THERE are 45,000 places of religious worship in England and Wales, having about 15,000,000 sittings. The average attendance on Sundays is about 10,000,000. The stated ministers of religion number 30,000, of whom 23,000 are of the Established Church. On every Sunday there are delivered 80,000 sermons, or 4,000,000 every year. There are 5,000,000 children in the Sunday-schools, for whom there are 500,000 teachers. There is a stated minister for every 700 persons, or 140 families; a place of worship for every 500 persons, or 100 families, and a communicant for every eight of the population. The annual cost for maintaining religion in the Kingdom is $80,000,000.

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SPEAKING of her own sex, a recent writer says that girls from twenty to twenty-five want to do everything. Parties, balls, the theatre every other night are necessary recreations. If they like walking, they must walk ten miles. If they like music they must practice six hours a day, and that nature is indeed poor which has only one or two tastes. All must paint and carve, and do Kensington work, and read German. Then there are the real duties which must do or die. Of course girls deteriorate. But by-and-by, generally between twenty-five and thirty, they are so reduced that they perceive their errors and begin to mend. I think most women with average good sense, reach fine condition by the time they are thirty-five, and ah, what a thing it is to be perfectly well!

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ONE advantage which electric arc lights have over all other means of illumination is that they give off a very large proportion of chemical rays, and in this manner simulate the effects of sunlight. Dark rooms, cellars, and other places where sunlight does not come, and which are usually unhealthy, may be expected to be quite as healthy, and to be as easily protected from foulness when arc lights are used, as rooms where sunlight can freely enter. In dark stores and counting-houses the introduction of the arc light must have a very decidedly beneficial effect upon the health of the employes, and to a very considerable extent relieve them from the attacks of diseases produced by want of sunlight. If a demonstration of this power of the arc light is needed, one has only to remain for a short time in close proximity to a large light to find that all the effects of the sunlight can be produced. We have seen faces, after a visit to an electric establishment, completely skinned, and with every appearance of sunburn, produced by the arc light alone.

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"THE greatest obstacle in the way of the prosperity of the legal profession," says the President of the Illinois Bar Association, "the most serious hindrance to their usefulness, the sources of greatest injury to their clients, the causes of deepest dissatisfaction and prejudice, are the delays, uncertainties, and expenses of legal proceedings. The losses and anxieties arising from these causes are often more than the results which the suitor is finally allowed to take out of the scales of justice." He said that no one ought to be heard in a court of justice except upon the condition of submitting both to do and receive substantial justice, without regard to any technicality or matter of form. "Let the law provide," he added, "that no judgment shall be set aside or reversed in any case, civil or criminal, provided it shall appear from the whole record that substantial justice has been done."

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FRENCH "chic" has been displaced by "pschutt." The fact is worth noticing, because the term has barely entered the language of England and America when the Parisians discard it as one throws away an old hat or the daily paper of yesterday. The Imperial Dictionary mentions chic, for which it asks the sound of sheek. Fine people use the word pschutt to denote ease, grace, taste in talk, dress, or manners—that element which marks the people of the world. One may be very correct, or even elegant, and yet lack pschutt. A lady may have grace and winning manners without possessing pschutt. To have pschutt, dress and manners must be in perfect harmony with the person; they must show agreeable individuality, and they must be successful. Pschutt is usually born with people, but can be improved by experience and skill. It is impossible to have pschutt save among pleasant people, just as one cannot chat pleasantly with a boor or a dogmatic professor. The Paris artists applied the term pschutt at one time to overdone limbs, then to young men whose coats were stuffed to improve the figure. Such persons are now called boudines. All men who wear corsets are called boudines in Paris. But men who attend to their dress just as the best artists like it, are now called pschutteux. Chic is dead—at least in Paris; but pschutt is the correct thing to have.

—

THERE has been exhibited at the rooms of the National Health Society, in England, a novel dress intended for the protection of sanitary visitors, nurses, and others who have to enter the rooms of persons suffering from infectious diseases. The garment is of mackintosh, glazed inside and out, and made completely to envelop the wearer and with a hood to cover the head. Thus only the hands and face remain exposed—a matter considered of comparatively little importance, as these can be easily washed with disinfectants. A not less important object proposed to be effected by the use of this dress is that by its removal when the wearer leaves the sick-room the clothes protected need not be changed, and the danger of disease being carried from house to house, or communicated to susceptible persons in public vehicles, is obviated. A tight case for the fever dress to be enclosed in is a part of the invention. At the end of the day, or as often as may be convenient, the dress can be cleansed with disinfectants. Further protection is given by a simple form of respirator. This is made of two folds of thin washing net, between which is placed a layer of medicated cotton-wool, through which the wearer can breathe, though no germs can pass. The respirator has tape strings which tie round the ears. After use the wool is burned and the net washed.

WHEN BUT A CHILD.

BY I. D. K.

When Love was a child, and went idling round,
'Mong flowers the whole summer's day,
One morn in the valley a bower he found,
So sweet it allured him to stay.

O'erhead, from the tree, hung a garland fair,
A fountain ran darkly beneath;
'Twas Pleasure had hung up the flow'rets there;
Love knew it, and jumped at the wreath.

But Love didn't know—and, at his weak years,
What urchin was likely to know!
That Sorrow had made of her own salt tears
The fountain that murmured below.

He caught at the wreath—with too much haste,
As boys when impatient will do—
It fell in those waters of briny taste,
And the flowers were all wet through.

This garland he now wears night and day;
And, though it all sunny appears
With Pleasure's own light, each leaf, they say,
Still tastes of the Fountain of Tears.

How It Was Wound Up.

BY A. M. E.

COME, Susie, be a good little girl now, and tell me you'll go with me to the picnic to-morrow! The wagonette's all been painted up, and I've got the prettiest new rug—all bright pink and gray stripes. Say yes, Susie, do!"

Jack Horton looked pleadingly at the blue-eyed golden-haired, crimson-lipped little lady leaning against the honeysuckle trellis.

"I don't think I care to go, Jack," she said reflectively.

"What! you'd rather stay at home? And all the young folks going?"

"Yes, I would. I'd rather stay at home and read," she answered briefly.

And then Jack's big brown eyes suddenly dilated.

"To read? Oh-h, I see! To suit Mr. Fairfax Hamilton, Susie?"

And then Susie flashed a defiant look from those lovely blue eyes that Jack Horton thought, and thought truly, were the loveliest in the world.

"Mr. Hamilton is a very educated, cultivated gentleman," she retorted.

"Whom you have known exactly three weeks. Is'nt it just about three weeks, Susie?"

"Yes, it is."

"And you've known me seventeen years—all your life!"

"You are so ridiculous, Jack. What if I have?"

"Oh, nothing!" he answered stiffly.

"And I don't doubt that Mr. Fairfax Hamilton considers our rustic amusements so much beneath his refined taste that he has persuaded——"

"Jack!" Susie interrupted, coloring with vexation. "I did not say so, nor——"

She did not finish her indignant protest, for at that very blessed minute, Topsy, the little servant, opened the sitting-room door, and ushered in the very identical gentleman under consideration.

"Well," Jack remarked, after a cold exchange of bows, "I'll not detain you any longer, Miss Lane. Good night!"

"Good evening!" Susie said demurely; and never gave honest Jack Horton another thought during that delightful evening, when she and Mr. Hamilton sat in the fine August moonlight, on the honeysuckled-trellised piazza, a cool westerly wind playing around them.

And how enchanting Mr. Hamilton was, as, swinging lazily in the hammock—Susie watching him from her rustic rocking-chair with fascinated eyes—he repeated delicious scraps of poetry, related entertaining stories, and, best of all, told her all about the world far beyond Farmingdale.

"How splendid! how enchanting! Why, Mr. Hamilton, life must be just like a fairy tale."

"Well I don't know about the fairy-tale, Miss Lane, but the enchantment certainly is to be enjoyed.

"And you ought to enjoy it; you have just the temperament to riot in elegant luxury and fashionable dissipation.

"You are buried alive here—no appreciation, no congeniality, no sympathy. I'd rather live among the catacombs than spend my life in this dead-and-alive hole!"

And Susie sighed, beginning to believe herself one of those rare blossoms destined to "waste all her sweetness on the desert air."

A vague longing rose up in her girlish heart—a yearning for something far and far above her commonplace, every day life.

She regretted that people—everybody—had fallen into the habit of believing her engaged to Jack Horton.

There was not one word of truth in it, if Jack had been her familiar all her life.

And then and there, sitting in the moonlight, listening to Mr. Hamilton's persuasive tones, Susie resolved to put an end, at once and for ever, to all the stupid nonsense about Jack and her.

When Mr. Hamilton took his leave, at ten o'clock that evening, promising to call for Susie to take a ride at four the next afternoon, Deacon Lane called Susie into the kitchen, where he sat sweetening a huge bowl of buttermilk for his special delectation.

"So you ain't a goin' to the picnic with Jack, eh?"

"No—no, father. I—I've changed my mind."

And Susie made unusual haste in lighting her bedroom candle.

"You needn't be in such a hurry, Susan. I've got a word to say, and I be a-goin' to say it."

Poor Susie winced at the contrast between the rough, honest speech, guiltless of grammar, and the musical accents which she had lately heard.

"I don't like this here way you've been doin' lately, Susan—a-playin' fast and loose with Jack Horton, the likeliest fellow to be found in these parts.

"You hadn't ort to fool with him—he's wuth a dozen o' them city chaps, and you'll find it out some day.

"Don't you kerry it too far, Susan, now mind."

And Susie, with scarlet cheeks, on which her gentle little mother had sympathetic compassion, had to stand by and listen to it all.

"Susan'll come out all right, father; so don't be afeard," Mrs. Lane said assertly, as she mixed her dough for the morrow's baking.

"Gals must be gals, you know, and I say let 'em fight their own battles. Susan'll come out all right. Good night, sis; run up to your bed now—it's nigh on to half-after ten."

And in consequence of which lateness—also, perhaps, the fact that sleep was more tardy than usual in visiting Susie's pretty eyes—Susie was not down to breakfast until nearly seven o'clock, and the first sound she heard was the wailing of Topsy, sitting on the kitchen-chamber stairs, her apron thrown over her head, her figure rocking back and forth.

"I didn't took it, Miss Sus'n—'deed and 'deed, and double 'deed I nober seed it, nor know'd nothin' 'bout it! And Mrs. Lane don't b'leeve me, and I jest wish I'd git drowned or somethin'!"

By degrees Susan learned the story—that Mrs. Lane's two articles of personal adornment, a heavy, old-fashioned, solid gold watch chain, and the equally fine massive brooch, had disappeared from the box in the bureau drawer, where they had lain in their nest of cotton—except when worn on grand occasions—ever since Susie could remember.

"I hate like p'lain to charge her with it, but there ain't nobody else knowed where mother's julery was 'cept her," Deacon Lane said regretfully.

"You'd better tell the hull truth, child, and if you're sorry, and won't do anything so wicked again, why—we'll say no more about it."

But Topsy was firm as adamant in her vehement protestations.

"I don't believe she did take them, mother," Susan said.

"Because there is a burglar in the village—don't you remember, the night of Mary Morris's birthday party, how the silver spoons and some money were stolen?"

"I hate to believe Topsy took 'em—I ain't agoin' to mistrust her no more!

"Father shall put some extry bolts on the doors, and I'll have Savage to sleep in the front hall o' nights.

"Deary me! to think such plain folks as us should be burglared!"

And when the picnic rode by two hours later, Susie, watching them from the front room windows, made the discovery that Jack Horton and his rig were not of the party.

For, disappointed and—well, yes, too jealous to be capable of enjoying the outing, Jack had concluded to run to town on a little matter of business that needed attending to, never imagining his presiding destiny ruled and ever ruled his going.

But the very first person he saw, as he got off the tram-car in the shabby up-town street, was Mr. Fairfax Hamilton.

And, strange to relate, that elegant gentleman went straight into a pawnbroker's shop.

"Upon my word!

"What business should such a fine gentleman have in such a place?

"By Jupiter, if Susie knew it! And I'll find out and enlighten her—yes, I will!"

So he quietly entered the shop, and, with a friendly venetian screen completely concealing him, he deliberately and with malice aforethought, listened.

"Only a fiver!" he heard Mr. Hamilton exclaim.

"Why, man, they are worth twenty. See for yourself—they're such gold as you don't come across nowadays."

"Ya-as, good—pooty good.

"I gif you thirty shillings.

"Where you git 'em, hey?"

"From my mother's family—as if the old things possessed any sentimental value to me.

"Come now—be generous, be just. Make it two sovereigns."

"Oh, Moses! you would spoil my business in no time.

"You let me see dem spboons—maybe I gif you more.

"Ah-h! Dot letter on 'em ish M, a-l-nit it?

"Yes M—my own initial. What'll you do, old skinflint? There's the chain and the pin, solid, and the silver—come, what's your best?"

"Fifty shillings, and it will be de ruin of my business. Oh, Moses, who is dish?"

It was no wonder the pawnbroker's voice suddenly changed to intense alarm and amazement, for two strong, relentless hands fell heavily on Mr. Fairfax Hamilton's shoulder, and a savage voice thundered in his ear—

"So it was you, was it, who stole Mrs. Lane's jewelry, and Mrs. Morris' silver spoons? Thief, villian, impostor! You're caught in your own trap at last, though. Officer, arrest him!"

And the owner of the other cruelly heavy hand, the police officer whom Jack had silently signalled as he passed the shop, the same minute Jack had caught a glimpse of the chain and pin he had known all his life, snapped the bracelets on the elegant Mr. Hamilton's wrists, and led him away to the police station.

While, his personal business to the city wholly and entirely forgotten, Jack made a bee-line back to Farmingdale, armed with the missing valuables.

"You must not cry and grieve so, Susie," Jack coaxed tenderly.

"The rascal isn't worth one of those tears from your dear blue eyes. Don't waste 'em on him, Susie, don't!

"It isn't for him," Susie sobbed piteously. "He may go to prison for all I care for him, but—but, I have been awfully cross and cruel to you, Jack, and I don't dare say I will be engaged to you! I am not half good—good—e-e-nough!"

And her sobs were so pitiful and humble and repentant, that somehow just the very thing to do seemed for Jack to gather her up in his strong, loving arms.

"I'm the best judge of that, girlie! You will make me the proudest, happiest man in the world if you will only say yes, darling. Say it, won't you, Susie?"

He lifted the sweet, flushed, tear-stained face to his, and waited—just a little second; and then a faint sound came to his ears that thrilled him from head to foot.

And then he kissed her until she laughed and begged for mercy.

At ten o'clock it all happened, and at three, Jack's waggonette stood at the farm-house door, waiting for Susie, in her pretty white suit, to come down and go to the picnic.

And at five o'clock, there wasn't a daintier, happier girl at Fawn Woods than she, nor a prouder, happier fellow than handsome Jack Horton.

While Mr. Fairfax Hamilton, enjoying the stifling temperature of his cell in the station-house, cursed himself and everybody else.

And that is the way it was wound up.

Too Handsome.

BY E. BULWER LYTTON.

MY dear friend, said I, the other day, to a mother who was expressing her anxiety that her son should be as fine as herself—"Believe me that if beauty be a gift to woman, it is an inconvenient one to man.

"A handsome face is very much against a young gentleman destined for the professions.

"An attorney takes an instinctive dislike to an Adonis of a barrister.

"What prudent man would like Antonious for his family physician? The envy of our sex (much more jealous than yours) will not acknowledge wisdom unless it has a snub nose.

"When Apollo came to earth, the highest employment he could obtain was that of a shepherd."

"Pooh!" replied my fair friend—has it not been well said, that a handsome face is a letter of recommendation?"

"It is a Bellerophon letter, madame, and betrays while it recommends. Permit me to tell you the history of Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy."

Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy was one of those models of perfection which a human father and mother can produce but a single example. Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy was therefore an only son. He was such an amazing favorite with both his parents that they resolved to ruin him; accordingly he was exceedingly spoiled, never annoyed by the sight of a book, and had as much plum-cake as he could eat. Happy would it had been for him could he always have eaten plum-cake and remained a child. "Never," says the Greek tragedian, "reckon a mortal happy till you have witnessed his end." A most beautiful creature was Ferdinand Fitzroy. When he was about sixteen, a crabbed old uncle represented to his parents the propriety of teaching Ferdinand to read and write.

Though not without some difficulty, he convinced them,—for he was exceedingly rich, and riches in an uncle are wonderful arguments respecting the nature of a nephew whose parents have nothing to leave him. So our hero was sent to school. He was naturally a very sharp, clever boy; and he came on surprisingly in his learning. The schoolmaster's wife liked handsome lads.

"What a genius Master Ferdinand Fitzroy will be if you take pains with him!" said she to her husband.

"Pooh! my dear, it is of no use to have it with him."

"And why, love?"

"Because he is a great deal too handsome ever to be a scholar."

"That's true enough, my dear," said the schoolmaster's wife.

So, because he was too handsome to be a scholar, Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy remained the lag of the fourth form.

They took our hero from school.

"What profession shall he follow?" said his mother.

"My first cousin is the lord-chancellor," said his father, "let him go to the bar."

The lord-chancellor dined there that day; Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy was introduced to him.

His lordship was a little rough-faced, hard-featured man, who thought beauty and idleness the same thing—and a parchment skin the legitimate complexion for a lawyer.

"Send him to the bar!" said he; "no, no, that will never do. Send him into the army; he is much too handsome to become a lawyer."

"That's true enough," said the mother. So they bought Ferdinand a cornetcy in the——regiment of Dragoons.

Things are not learned by inspiration. Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy had never ridden at at school, except when he was hoisted; he was, therefore, a very indifferent horseman; they sent him to the riding school, and everybody laughed at him.

"He's a stupid ass!" said Cornet Horsephiz, who was very ugly.

"A horrid puppy," said Lieutenant St. Squintem, who was still uglier.

"If he does not ride better he will disgrace the regiment!" said Captain Rivalhate, who was very good-looking.

"I say, Mr. Bumpernwell (to the riding-master) make that youngster ride less like a miller's sack."

"Oh, sir! he will never ride better," said Mr. Bumpernwell.

"And why the deuce will he not?"

"Bless you, colonel, he is a great deal too handsome for a cavalry officer."

"True," said Cornet Horsephiz.

"Very true!" said Lieutenant St. Squinteem.

"We must cut him!" said the colonel.

And Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy was accordingly cut.

Our hero was a youth of susceptibility—he quitted the——regiment, and challenged the colonel.

The colonel was killed.

"What improper behavior in Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy!" said the colonel's relations.

"Very true!" said the world.

The parents were in despair.

They were not rich; but our hero was an only son, and they sponged hard on the old uncle.

"He is very clever," said they both, "and may do yet."

So they borrowed a few thousands from the uncle, and bought his nephew a seat in parliament.

Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy was ambitious, and desirous of retrieving his character.

He fagged like a dragon—conned pamphlets and reviews—got Ricardo by heart—and made notes upon the English constitution.

He rose to speak.

"What a handsome fellow!" whispered one of the members.

"What a coxcomb!" said another.

"Never do for a speaker!" said a third, very audibly.

And the gentleman on the opposite benches cried *hear, hear!* Impudence is only indigenous in Milesia, and an orator is not made in a day.

Discouraged by his reception, Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy grew a little embarrassed.

"Told you so!" said one of his neighbors.

"Fairly broke down," said another.

"Too fond of his hair to have anything in his head," said a third, who was considered a wit.

"Hear, hear!" cried the gentleman on the opposite benches.

Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy sat down—he had not shone; but in reality, he had not failed. Many a first rate speaker had made a less flourishing commencement; and many a county member had been declared as a phœnix of promise upon half his merit.

Not so thought the heroes of corn-laws.

"Your Adonisses never make orators!" said a crack speaker with a wry nose.

"Nor men of business, either," added the chairman of a committee, with a face like a kangaroo's.

"Poor fellow!" said the civilest of the set. "He's a deuced deal too handsome to work! By Jove, he is going to speak again!—this will never do; we must cough him down!"

And Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy was coughed down accordingly.

Our hero was now seven or eight-and-twenty; handsomer than ever, and the admiration of all the young ladies at Almack's.

"We have nothing to leave you," said the parents, who had long spent their fortune, and now lived on the credit of having once enjoyed it.

"You are the handsomest man in London; you must marry an heiress."

"I will," said Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy.

Miss Helen Convolvulus was a charming young lady, with a hare-lip and six thousand a year.

To Miss Helen Convolvulus then our hero paid his addresses.

Heavens! what an uproar her relations made about the matter.

"Easy to see his intentions," said one; "a handsome fortune-hunter that wants to make the best of his person."

"Handsome is as handsome does!" says another.

"He was turned out of the army and murdered his colonel."

"Never marry a beauty," said a third; "he can admire none but himself."

"He will have so many mistresses," said a fourth.

"Make you perpetually jealous," said a fifth.

"Spend your fortune," said a sixth.

"And break your heart?" said a seventh.

Miss Helen Convolvulus was prudent and wary.

She saw a great deal of justice in what was said; and was sufficiently contented with liberty and six thousand a year, not to be highly impatient for a husband; but our heroine had no aversion to a lover, especially to so handsome a lover as Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy.

Accordingly she neither accepted nor discarded him; but kept him on hope, and suffered him to get into debt with his tailor and coach-maker, on the strength of becoming Mrs. Fitzroy Convolvulus.

Time went on, and excuses and delays were easily found; however, our hero was sanguine and so were his parents.

A breakfast at Chiswick and a putrid

fever, carried off the latter, within one week of each other; but not till they had blessed Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy, and rejoiced that they had left him so well provided for.

Now, then, our hero depended solely upon the crabbed old uncle and Miss Helen Convolvulus; the former though a baronet and a satirist, was a banker and a man of business.

He looked very distastefully at the Hyperion curls and white teeth of Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy.

"If I make you my heir," said he, "I expect you will continue the bank."

"Certainly sir!" said the nephew.

"Humph!" grunted the uncle; "a pretty fellow for a banker!"

Debtors grew pressing to Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy, and Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy grew pressing to Miss Helen Convolvulus.

"It is a dangerous thing," said she, timidly, "to marry a man so admired—will you be always faithful?"

"By heaven!" cried the lover.

"Heigho!" sighed Miss Helen Convolvulus; and Lord Rufus Pumilion entering, the conversation was changed.

But the day of the marriage was fixed; and Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy bought a new curricle.

By Apollo, how handsome he looked in it!

A month before the wedding day the uncle died.

Miss Helen Convolvulus was quite tender in her condolences—

"Cheer up, my Ferdinand!" said she; "for your sake I have discarded Lord Pumilion!"

"Adorable condescension!" cried our hero; "but Lord Rufus Pumilion is only four feet two, and has hair like a peony."

"All men are not so handsome as Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy," was the reply.

Away goes our hero to be present at the opening of his uncle's will.

"I leave," said the testator (who, I have before said, was a bit of a satirist,) "my share of the bank, and the whole of my fortune, legacies excepted, to" — (here Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy wiped his beautiful eyes with his cambric handkerchief) — "my natural son, John Spriggs, an industrious painstaking youth, who will do credit to the bank.

"I did once intend to have made my nephew Ferdinand my heir; but so curly a head can have no talent for accounts.

"I want my successor to be a man of business, not beauty; and Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy is a great deal too handsome for a banker; his good looks will, no doubt, win him any heiress in town.

"Meanwhile, I leave him, to buy a dressing-case, five thousand dollars."

"A thousand devils!" cried Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy, banging out of the room.

He flew to his mistress.

She was not at home.

"Lies," says the Italian proverb, "have short legs," but truths, if they are pleasant, have terribly long ones!

The next day, Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy received a most obliging note of dismissal.

"I wish you every happiness," said Miss Helen Convolvulus, in conclusion; "but my friends are right!

"You are much too handsome for a husband!"

And the week following, Miss Helen Convolvulus became Lady Rufus Pumilion!

"Alas! sir," said the bailiff as a day or two after the dissolution of Parliament he was jogging along with Mr. Ferdinand Fitzroy, in a hackney-coach bound to the King's Bench—"Alas! sir, what a pity it is to take so handsome a gentleman to prison!"

Will She Marry?

BY GEORGE ARNOLD.

THERE were only seven of us, all girls, in the dear old parsonage at Wrayburn, where papa had lived for thirty odd years.

Under the daisies in the pretty country churchyard dear mamma had slept since Kate was a wee baby, and Aunt Jane had come to care for the motherless children of her brother as soon as the calamity fell upon him.

We are a rosy-cheeked, healthy set of girls, rather good-looking, Nell being our beauty, and I the only invalid.

I am a cripple, but I am not going to bother you with my story, excepting as my observations are recorded.

It was in the spring, and my sisters and Aunt Jane were very busy with housework.

I was in my room, knitting; papa wandering about, disconsolate at the invasion of his study, and consequent interruption of his literary work, when the murmur of voices from the porch floated up to me, and I mentally exclaimed—

"Dear me! Chris is proposing to Nell again."

"And nobody ever will, or ever can love you as I do," Chris was saying, when Nell's voice struck in.

"There, that window fairly dazzles you!

"Who says I can't clean glass?

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Chris. No, of course!"

"But, Nell, do listen to me!"

"Chris, did you ask me to marry you when I was in my cradle?

"I am sure you have asked me once a week ever since.

"I won't, you know, or ought to know, by this time.

"Why can't you ask somebody else, just for variety?

"I am sure any of the other girls will make a much better wife than I will; that is," said Nell, with a sudden spasm of loyalty for the rest of us, "if any of them would take you."

"How can I care for any one else when my whole heart has been yours all my life?

"It is cruel to trifle with true love, Nell."

"Don't be an idiot, Chris," said Nell, sharply.

"I never trifled with you!

"I told you that you were a horrid boy, and I would never marry you, when you used to steal apples to present to me, and I never, never told you anything else."

"No," sighed Chris.

"Then why don't you let me alone?" asked Nell.

Here Aunt Jane, her head tied up in a manner that defies description, came upon the scene with—

"Oh, here's Chris!

"Chris, do run over to Smith's and get me a paper of carpet tacks!"

Chris departed.

Presently Smith's boy brought the carpet tacks, and Nell was let alone for the remainder of that day, as far as Chris was concerned.

The next day the cleaning went forward briskly, but it was still early in the morning when Nell came to my room equipped for a walk.

"Any letters?" she asked. "I am going down the street."

"None," I said; "I did not think you could be spared."

"Aunt Jane is rather grumpy about it," said Nell, adjusting a coquettish wreath of apple-blossoms upon her hat, "but I want to get the smell of soapsuds out of my nose.

"I may stop at Gilmore's; have you any message?"

"Only my love to Mrs. Gilmore," I answered.

Now, Mrs. Gilmore was the mother of Nell's persistent adorer, Christopher Nelson Gilmore, and the families had been intimate for years.

Still, for Nell to take the middle of housecleaning week to call on Mrs. Gilmore was a little out of order.

She flitted away, her sunny curls dancing on the soft May breeze, and I, putting two and two together, remembered that Chris had not been in the house for twenty-four hours.

Vainly I tried to recall a similar interval when he was in Wrayburn.

School, college, business had called him out of the village, but his home hours were always fairly divided between his mother's house and ours.

Something must be the matter!

I thought of all possible and impossible catastrophes till I was not surprised to see Nell coming in at the gate in a subdued frame of mind, apparent upon her pretty face.

She came directly to me, as they all do, even Aunt Jane and papa, in emergencies.

"Belle," she said, in a low, grave tone, "Chris has gone to Cape Town."

"Gone!" I cried. "Why, he was here yesterday!"

"He went to London yesterday afternoon, and he has gone to visit his uncle, the one who offered him a business opening some time ago.

"Chris did not want a business opening, as he has plenty of money; and, Belle, Mrs. Gilmore says it is all my fault that she is left alone and childless."

"Scarcely your fault, dear," I said, my heart aching for the piteous strain in the sweet voice, the pain in the bright eyes.

"You were right to refuse to marry a man you do not love."

But Nell grew whiter, and went slowly to her own room.

After that, in all the family lamentations for Chris, so many years a sort of adopted brother in our midst, Nell never spoke of him.

The next winter, Meg, our eldest, was married; and, as if matrimony was a contagion, Janey followed her example; then Maude, Lizzie, and even Kate, our baby.

Nell, the prettiest, smartest, sweetest of all, had offers in abundance, spent two winters in London visiting Meg, and, by all accounts, captivating hearts by scores; but coming back to be the life and happiness of our home.

"There must be one old maid in every family," she said; and when I suggested my eminent fitness for the position, she smiled loftily, and said—

"Mr. Brooks says you are the household angel, so please let us hear no more nonsense."

"There is Aunt Jane, too," I said, mildly.

"Belle," she said, severely, "will you stop talking nonsense?

"Aunt Jane, indeed!"

It really did seem as if Nell was in earnest about a single life.

But, after all, she was only twenty-four, and looked about seventeen, when, one day, who should walk into the Parsonage parlor, as coolly as if he had left it the day before, but Chris.

We were all there as he came in, but before he had spoken to Aunt Jane I saw that Nell had vanished.

Did Chris see her run out of the front door as he entered the front window?

I think he did.

There was a subdued twinkle in his eyes as he inquired for my infirmities, not at all consistent with his words of sympathy.

Presently Nell came in, with a quiet smile of greeting, and a perfect composure of manner, but Chris was a match for her.

It was as good as a play to watch those two, so completely did they ignore the fact that he was a discarded lover who had been sent away by her cruelty.

They conversed easy and gracefully—Christopher's African experiences, varied by descriptions of the family weddings, the new homes, the brothers-in-law, the children, and a thousand other details, in which our caller expressed the greatest interest.

After that he dropped in as of old, making himself agreeable and useful to everyone in the house, especially tender, as he ever had been, to me.

Indeed, I found myself wondering sometimes if he was going to take Nell's mocking advice, and, all the others being appropriated, offer himself to me.

He took me for long drives in his mother's pony-carriage, and was always ready to hear of Nell's conquests, showing no jealousy, but a great deal of amusement, over her coquetries.

"She was a born coquette!" he said, once; "and yet nobody can call Nell vain.

"It has been a matter of course with her to be admired ever since she could run alone."

"She is our beauty now, as of old," I answered; and Chris assented cordially.

"I have seen no face so winsome since I left home," he said.

But he spoke with the frank admiration of a brother, and gave no token of a love-sick swain.

Had he outlived his love, I wondered, and come home to prove to Nell that her days of tyranny were over?

I think Nell half suspected that he had.

Always even-tempered, Nell became fitful and capricious; bright and laughing when Chris was with us, often silent and gloomy when she thought herself unnoticed.

She lost her color, and I caught her more than once rubbing her cheeks when going down-stairs to see Chris, and she was snappish and deeply repentant therefor a dozen times a day.

"What ails Nell?" Aunt Jane asked me, anxious for her darling.

"She eats nothing, and I am sure doesn't sleep well.

"I wonder if it would do her any good to spend a few weeks with Kate?"

Nell, on being consulted, caught eagerly at the suggestion, and hurried her wardrobe into a trunk, as if answering at life or death summons.

She made no farewells, but flitted off so suddenly that it made us all stare with surprise.

"Elinor was always impulsive," papa said.

And Aunt Jane only answered, "But bless me, I didn't mean to drive the child out of the house!"

Chris said nothing, but I was certainly convinced of the reality of his whiskers, so ferociously were they pulled all the evening.

But the next day Mrs. Gilmore sent over a wee note of dire distress.

Chris had been thrown from his horse, and the doctor feared some spinal injury.

Aunt Jane went over at once, and came back with a grave face.

"He is badly hurt, entirely unconscious," she said.

If Nell's departure was sudden, her return was not less so.

"Did you take off your hat at Kate's?" I inquired, with mild sarcasm, but regretted it when Nell's arms stole round my neck, and a face wet with tears was pressed against my own.

"Will he die?" she whispered.

"Oh, Belle, Belle, what shall I do if he dies?"

Then, as if ashamed of letting even my loving eyes read her secret, she rushed away and locked herself in her own room.

Such restless misery followed that my heart ached for her.

She made Aunt Jane spend most of her time at Mrs. Gilmore's, and undertook the housekeeping herself, letting papa miss nothing of his sister's care.

But she seemed to live in a sort of breathless expectation of the news from Chris.

Worse!

Very low!

Such were the disheartened tidings day after day, until there came one dreadful night of agonized watching, and he changed for the better.

Convalescence was slow and tedious; but one day, when we were all in the drawing-room, there was a soft rush across the room, on the porch, down the garden, and a joyous ring in Nell's voice, crying—

"Oh, Chris!—dear Chris!—are you really here again?"

Then I saw him leaning one hand on her shoulder, one on his cane, as he came feebly up the path, pale, thin, and weak, but Chris restored to us.

Spring came round once more, and Nell and Aunt Jane busied themselves with the usual extra housework.

Once more voices floated up to me from the porch.

"You were cleaning those windows when I went away, Nell."

"Please Chris, don't!" Nell pleaded.

"Don't repeat the offence for which I was banished.

"But I must, darling. It is for the last time."

"Hush!" I whispered at this crisis, as Aunt Jane entered my room. "Chris is proposing to Nell."

"Well," said my aunt, "that is an old story."

"But she has accepted him," I said, as a faint—

"Yes, dear Chris; I know now you are the only man I could ever love," stole up to me.

"Ahem!" said Aunt Jane. "You and I, Belle, will be the old maids of the family, after all."

And Aunt Jane was right.

Dear papa says—I know it is only his kindness, but it is pleasant to hear—that he could not spare the last of his girls to any husband.

WINNING A HAT.—Shortly before the breaking out of the last war between the United States and Great Britian, Captain Decatur, of the United States Navy, and Captain Carden, of His Britannic Majesty's Navy, met in Philadelphia, and grew to be warm friends.

One day, as they sat talking over their wine, the conversation turned upon the relative powers of the two navies.

Decatur claimed that his country had good ships, and, what was better still, good sailors, and brave men; and they could raise all the men that would be required in an emergency.

"I grant," said Carden, "you have good ships; and I know you Yankees are proverbially brave; but, my dear captain—your sore lack is experience.

"You have had comparatively no training in actual warfare.

"Suppose our two countries should come to blows again?

"And, I declare, I sometimes think I see the signs of it.

"But suppose it should happen; and you and I should meet on the sea.

"My men would be old, experienced gunners.

"Why, Stephen, I should knock you into a cocked hat in half an hour!"

"Look you, John," retorted Decatur, laughingly.

"I'll tell you what I'll do!

"I'll bet you a good new cocked hat that, if ever we meet on the sea, I will whip you!"

"Done!" cried Carden.

They shook hands on it, and then they turned to other matters.

In less than two years from that time, on the 25th of October, 1812, Commodore Stephen Decatur, then in command of the frigate United States, fell in with an English ship of war—also a frigate—and gave battle.

The action was severe; but the effects of that severity was mostly on one side.

The gunnery of the American ship was superior in every way.

The Englishman very soon found that, if he would accomplish anything, he must come to close quarters—a movement to which the American did not object.

The two ships came nearer; but the Englishman continued to suffer.

Pretty soon his mizzen-mast was shot away, and went overboard; then his main and fore-topmasts followed; and then his bowsprit went.

At this point Decatur fell off, and appeared to be running away, whereat a tremendous cheer arose from the Englishman's deck; for they supposed the Yankee had received severe internal injuries, though her spars were intact.

But—lo and behold! Decatur had fallen off for the purpose of going about—and coming up on the other tack, into a raking position.

That was more than the Englishman bargained for; and when he found the enemy coming up under his lee quarter, with a full broadside ready for sweeping his decks, he surrendered.

"What ship is that?" hailed Decatur.

"His Majesty's frigate Macedonian, Captain John S. Carden," was the answer.

The English ship lay a dismantled wreck.

The American frigate was also knocked about.

As soon as it could conveniently be done, the English captain caused one of his boats to be lowered and manned, and shortly afterwards he came over the side, descended the gangway ladder, and stood upon the American's deck.

With a polite bow, but with a pallor and a quiver about his lips, the English captain drew his sword, and offered its hilt to his captor.

"No," said Decatur, with a motion of his hand, to signify that he would have the blade returned to its scabbard, "I will not take the sword of a man who has defended his ship so bravely.

"But," he added, as he grasped Carden's hand, sinking his voice so that others might not hear, "I think, John, I am fairly entitled to that hat!"

And we can imagine that the scene in the cabin of the American frigate, on that October evening, was anything but warlike.

COMPETITION is lively among the merchants of Manchester, N. H. One advertises that he is marking three cent postage stamps down to two cents, in view of the probable reduction in postage rates by the Government, though he thoughtfully stipulates that only a single stamp will be sold to one person.

ALL classes of chronic diseases are being successfully treated by Compound Oxygen. Send to DRS. STARKEY & PALEN, 1109 Girard St., Philadelphia, Pa., for their Treatise on this new and remarkable curative agent. It will be mailed free.

In The Jungle.

BY HENRY FRITH.

NEXT to that of an explorer I have always thought the life of a surveyor possessed more romance than any other professional career a man could enter on.

I have had every opportunity of testing that theory too, and the oftener I put it to the proof the more firmly convinced I believe of its soundness.

Take my own career for an example.

I graduated as a civil engineer out of the office of one of the most eminent professors in the country.

My first work was upon the survey of the Pacific railway, and I was three times nearly scalped by the Indians before my first year of service.

During the second year I was once captured by the Sioux, and seven times chased by the Blackfeet and other roving savages.

I fell twice from a precipice, was caught in a prairie fire, nearly frozen in several snow storms, and had an arm broken by a fall from a kicking mustang.

After this I cried Quits, and by the time I had been tied out twice to be shot as a spy by the government, and fired at a dozen times by the insurgents, I concluded that life was too exciting in the Ever Faithful Isle to suit even my adventurous temperament, so I went to Central America, and between there and South America, experienced a lively existence of some three years.

Then came the crowning events of my life.

In Peru I fell in with an English capitalist who was organizing a company to construct a railroad in Central India.

He had come to Peru to close up some guano interests there prior to settling in Calcutta.

We became acquainted and went to India together.

There I was given charge of the preliminary survey of the road, and at the head of a couple of dozen natives sent off to do my duty.

If my life had been an adventurous one before, it had now certainly become a whole library of romance.

Living in a wilderness, sleeping in a native hut, then in the open air, and once in a while enjoying the hospitable shelter of a lonely bungalow, all the perils and pleasures of an Oriental exploration were tasted by me.

The district I had to make myself acquainted with was one of the wildest and in all India; a land of jungles, of tangled forests, and vast, arid plains, burned lifeless by the fierce sun.

This tract abounds in wild beasts, and in our operations we were exposed to constant dangers.

Several of my natives were bitten by monstrous serpents, and in every case they died.

Even when I tried to counteract the effects of the poison, they stubbornly refused to submit to the treatment.

It seems that they worshipped a sort of a deputy God in the shape of a serpent, and when they were snake-bitten they regarded it as a Divine infliction that it would be sacrilegious to counteract, even if it could be done.

Nor were serpents our only natural foes.

Once we started a drove of wild pigs from a palm thicket, and the leader, a ferocious old boar, made his big tusks meet in the thigh of one of my Chinamen, severing the femoral artery, so that the man bled to death in less than an hour.

At another time, a drove of buffaloes ran us down, and trampled a boy to death, and one night a cheetah quietly walked into camp, seized a sleeper by the legs, and was hauling him into the jungle when his cries brought us to the rescue.

Added to these visitations, nature herself was armed against us.

The deadly dews of the jungle distilled themselves through our veins, filling our blood with fever.

Thus, shaken by chills at night, and burned by fever by day, we fought a hard fight with the wilderness, and made slow but steady progress toward our end.

We had been at it a couple of months, and had cut our way nearly through the district, when we came to one of those impenetrable jungles, progress through which was as difficult as tunnelling a mountain.

At this spot I found my men develop a trepidation and weariness they never had exhibited before.

The Hindu, though not a lion in courage, is a fatalist to the core, and will undertake many dangerous tasks without hesitation, simply because he does not weigh the chances he assumes.

Those who know him best say that there is only one danger of the jungle of which he is afraid.

It is a man-eating tiger.

Consequently, when I found my fellows displaying a hesitancy, and going to work chopping a path into the jungle with feeble and reluctant strokes, I comprehended the cause of their apprehension.

"Is there a tiger in the brush?" I asked the leader of the wood-cutters, a lean old Hindu.

"Yes, sahib," he replied.

"A man-eater?"

"A man-eater, sahib, of the very worst kind."

"How do you know?"

"From the villagers, sahib."

There was a wretched village a mile wide, whose household had, as I afterwards learned, suffered the loss of several young children in consequence of the voracity of this brute.

"Very well," I said.

"If there is a tiger there we had better beat him out and kill him before he has time to injure us.

"Let the rifles be brought from the camp."

The man-eater, however, saved us the trouble of beating him out of his covert.

While the old woodsman and I were conversing, the sound of knives hooping at the bush had roused him in his lair.

Now a ferocious howl caused me to turn.

There was a crash and rustle in the brush, a wild scream from the terrified attendants, and then a living thunderbolt, launching itself at me, I staggered back and fell in the long grass.

The tiger rolled over me, and grabbed one of my flying followers with his tremendous jaw.

The one blow brought the unfortunate down, when the tiger, ripping him open with another dab of his claws, coolly proceeded to devour him, without paying any attention to us.

Or rather to me, for my fleet-footed varlets had already made off, and with the death cries of the poor wretch whom I could do nothing to save ringing in my ears I followed them, leaving the man-eater to his dreadful feast.

Arrived at the camp I armed such of my natives as had enough to follow me and we returned to the scene of the tragedy.

The tiger was still employed at his meal, and a volley of hot lead laid him out beside his victim.

We cut our way through the jungle without opposition after that, but you may be sure I never went without a weapon by my side in my battle with the wilderness after that.

My railroad survey in India finished my career in that profession.

I am now a stockholder in the road, and let others do the hard work I earned my comforts by.

Not long ago I met an American gentleman, an ex-officer in the Confederate service, in Bombay, and being introduced to him as a fellow-countryman he asked—

"What regiment did you serve in, sir?"

"Regiment!" I repeated. "What do you mean?"

"Why, to judge from your many scars you have seen active service in the field."

"But not in that of war, sir," I answered.

"I won my scars in a more perilous line."

He laughed when I told him what I was and said—

"This is the second time I have been mistaken in the same way."

"What was the first?" I asked.

"It was in Washington.

"I used to meet at the hotel a handsome, stalwart fellow, who had lost his left arm.

"He had a bold and easy manner and a soldierly air which attracted me to him.

"I never inquired into his military career, as he did not allude to it himself.

"But one day I remarked to a friend that it was a pity war should make cripples of such noble specimens of manhood.

"War be hanged!" replied my friend.

"Why he lost his arm by tumbling from the third-story window of his hotel when he was drunk.

"And so he had."

TWO WAYS.—Two boys went to hunt grapes. One was happy because they found grapes. The other was unhappy because the grapes had seeds in them.

Two men being convalescent were asked how they were. One said: "I am better to-day." The other said: "I was worse yesterday."

When it rains one man says: "This will make mud." Another: "This will lay the dust."

Two children looking through colored glasses, one said: "The sky is blue." And the other said: "It is red."

Two boys eating their dinner; one said: "I would rather have something other than this." The other said: "This is better than nothing."

A servant thinks a man's house is principally kitchen. A guest, that it is principally parlor.

"I am sorry that I live," says one man. "I am sorry that I must die," says another.

"I am glad," says one, "that it is no worse." "I am sorry," says another, that it is no better.

One man spoils a good repast by thinking of a better repast of another. Another one enjoys a poor repast by contrasting it with none at all."

One man is thankful for his blessings. Another is morose for his misfortunes.

One man thinks he is entitled to a better world, and is dissatisfied because he hasn't got it. Another thinks he is not justly entitled to any, and is satisfied with this.

One man makes up his accounts from his wants. Another from his assets.

Your Not.

All kidney and urinary complaints, Diabetes, Bright's Disease, Diabetes and Liver troubles Hop Bitters will surely cure. Don't suffer yourself, have friends or family suffer, but use Hop Bitters and be convinced that they are the purest and best medicine ever made. See other column.

LIFE IN DEATH.

PARADOXICAL as the assertion seems to the ordinary mind, unlearned as to the latest revelations of the microscope, there is no such thing as death in the sense of extinction of life.

Quantitatively, not far from five per centum of the human body consist of matter that actually lives; for, according to Prof. Beale, those tissues as cuticle, muscular fibres, the finger-nails, the hair, the bones, tendons, etc., contain minute living particles, they are not living matter in the proper acception of the term, but matter that has once passed through the conditions of life and is on its way to resolution into such products as ammonia, carbonic acid, urea, and so on.

At different ages there is some variation in the comparative quantities of living and non-living matter in the human body, the former being relatively larger in infancy and youth than in manhood, and constantly diminishing as age advances; but on the average, fully ninety-five per centum of a living man is already dead; and the process of death—that is, of the transformation of protoplasm into formed material or tissue—is one that forms the primary basis of human life; so that the very process of living is interlinked to and interwoven and correlated with the process of death.

Every thought, every ideation, every contraction of muscle, every impression of the senses, has its material equivalent in the death of a given quantity of matter that previously lived.

The living matter of the body is composed of units of protoplasm styled cells—minute originally spherical, elements, each of which, independently considered is a microscopic being, possessing an individual life history of its own.

From forty to sixty days represent probably the average life-time of a cell; and so, in the progress of a human life from infancy to age many generations of cell-life are embraced; that is to say, a man dies many times before he comes vis a vis with the final mystery.

It is by groups of these little bodies, acting in concert and concurring together to produce a single result, that the complex tissues of organic life are created and maintained, each of these myriads of independent lives being a microscopic laboratory for the evolution of the formed materials of muscle, bone, brain, nerve and membrane, by means of which our higher functions are executed.

Now and then a cell, or a group of cells, rebels against its life-long slavery to the higher purpose; and then comes a morbid development, such as cancer or tubercle.

It is now a settled fact of physiology that when a man dies, that is, when the functional life is arrested, these little bodies resume their action as independent centers of living matter; so that quantitatively speaking, there is no less life in the body as it lies in its coffin habited for the grave than there was when the eyes still softened with tenderness, the busy brain laid plans for the future, or the active hand guided the pen or the pencil; and the collective amount of microscopic life in the form of minute organism, that will be generated by the dead body in the progress of decomposition is an exact equivalent for the amount of living matter it originally contained. In other words, death, in the sense of extinction of life, is a fiction of our human senses, not a reality.

The myriads of cells and cell groups, have ceased to concur in the execution of the higher purposes of organic life, but they have not ceased to live, and now, like Saturn in the old myth, devour the tissues they have created.

But, if death is in reality a fiction, and if the body in its coffin is no less living than before, what mysterious entity or energy was it that, now departed, once controlled and subordinated those millions of cell-lives to the higher purposes of a human life?

Prof. Crookes would say that it was the ethereal psychical body, with its special group of energies, transferring and identifying the grosser physical body; and he would point to the fact that a human life is composed of two lives interwoven together, but fundamentally distinct, in evidence of his hypothesis.

There is thus in the deepest facts of science indubitable evidence of the existence of higher spiritual and psychical being interwoven with our physical lives; and, if this be so, death is but a translation into a higher and more beautiful form of life. But it must not be forgotten that the same argument that applies to the ant or fly that buzzes its little day and perishes. Why not? What is a man more than a fly except in the manner of avoirdupois?

A BOY, SOME CATTLE, AND A STORY.—Some cattle which a boy of twelve was watching in Dakota were destroyed by a prairie fire. As the lad did not return home, it was believed that he had shared the same fate. It now appears, however, that the accident so frightened him that he wandered off, and remained away until he had earned money enough to cover the loss of the stock. Then he reappeared at home triumphantly.

Liver, Kidney and Bright's Disease.

A remedy that destroys the germ or cause of Bright's Disease, Diabetes, Kidney and Liver Complaints, and has power to restore the blood to a healthy condition, is the great Hop Bitters, and positive proof of this can be found by the cure, or the saving your neighbors, who have been cured by it.

DR. RADWAY'S SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.

The Great Blood Purifier.

FOR THE CURE OF CHRONIC DISEASE.

SCROFULOUS OR SYPHILITIC, HEREDITARY OR CONTAGIOUS.

[illegible] Complaints, Bleeding of the Lungs, Dyspepsia, [illegible] Complaints, Gout [illegible]

For the cure of

SKIN DISEASES,

[illegible] PIMPLES, BLOTCHES, SALT RHEUM, SORES, ULCERS Dr Radway's Sarsaparillian Resolvent [illegible] elements. It purifies the blood, restoring health and vigor; clear skin and beautiful complexion secured to all.

Liver Complaints, Etc.,

[illegible] Sarsaparillian Resolvent excel all [illegible] Skin Diseases, but it is the only positive cure for

Kidney and Bladder Complaints

Urinary and Womb Diseases, Gravel, Diabetes, Dropsy, [illegible] of Water, Incontinence of Urine, Albuminuria, and in all cases where there are deposits, or the water is thick, [illegible] the white of an egg appearance and white bone-dust deposit, [illegible] there is a pricking, burning sensation [illegible] and pain in the small of the back and along the loins.

SOLD BY DRUGGISTS

One bottle contains more of the active principles of medicine than any other preparation. Taken in Teaspoonful Doses, while others require five or six times as much. **One Dollar Per Bottle.**

R. R. R.

RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

The Cheapest and Best Medicine for Family Use in the World.

COUGHS, COLDS, INFLAMMATIONS, FEVER AND AGUE CURED AND PREVENTED

DR. RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

RHEUMATISM, NEURALGIA, DIPHTHERIA INFLUENZA, SORE THROAT, DIFFICULT BREATHING.

RELIEVED IN A FEW MINUTES

By Radways' Read Relief.

MALARIA

IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS.

FEVER AND AGUE.

There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure Fever and Ague, and all other Malarious, Bilious, Scarlet, Typhoid, Yellow and other fevers, (aided by RADWAY'S PILLS) so quick as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

[illegible] the Blood.

ACHES AND PAINS.

For [illegible] the joints, pains in the bowels, heartburn, [illegible] of all kinds, Radway's Ready Relief will afford immediate ease, and its continued use for a few days effect a permanent cure. Price, 50 cents.

RADWAY'S REGULATING PILLS.

Perfect Purgative, Soothing Aperient, Act Without Pain, Always Reliable, and Natural in Their Operations.

A VEGETABLE SUBSTITUTE FOR CALOMEL.

Perfectly Tasteless, elegantly [illegible] R.R.R. for the cure of [illegible] Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, Nervous [illegible] Constipation, Costiveness [illegible] Disease, Piles, Fulness of the Blood in the Head, Acidity of the Stomach, Nausea, Heartburn, Disgust of Food, Fulness or Weight in the Stomach, Sour Eructations, Sinking or Fluttering at the Heart, [illegible] Dimness of Vision, Dots or Webs before the Sight, Fever and Dull Pain in the Head, Deficiency of Perspiration, Yellowness of the Skin and Eyes, Pain in the side, Chest, Limbs, and Sudden Flushes of Heat, Burning in the Flesh.

A few doses of RADWAY'S PILLS will free the system of all the above-named disorders.

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SOLD BY DRUGGISTS.

READ "FALSE AND TRUE."

Send a letter stamp to RADWAY & CO., No. 32 Warren Street, New York.

Information worth thousands will be sent to you.

TO THE PUBLIC.

Be sure and ask for Radway's, and see that the name "Radway" is on what you buy.

NERVOUS DEBILITY

Vital Weakness and Prostration, from overwork of brain or sex, is rapidly and promptly cured by

DR. PIERCE'S HOMEOPATHIC SPECIFIC No. 22.

Been in use 30 years, and is the most successful remedy known. Price $1 per vial or 5 vials and large vial of powder for $5, sent free on receipt of price.

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[illegible] AND NOT WEAR OUT.

SOLD [illegible] J. S. HINCH & CO. 10 Day St. N.Y.

FREE [illegible] 'Health Helper' Perfect Health if Box 194, Buffalo, N.Y.

Our Young Folks.

A SEA OF FIRE.

BY D. E.

HOT as ever, and hotter too!

"When shall we have rain again, I wonder?"

"Hold your tongue, can't you, Dick! Whatever sets you wishing for rain on the morning of a picnic?"

"There's no need to wish for it," struck in the third member of the party, with a grin.

"You've only got to start out on a plains, and the rain's bound to come without being asked."

The speakers were three young Englishmen, on a hunting expedition over the prairies of the Far West.

Their tour had already lasted several weeks, and their plan for the day was to ride over the prairie to a curiously-shaped hill, or rather bluff, which was one of the sights of the district, lunch at its foot, and then, unless some specially attractive game happened to fall in their way, ride back again, before the heat of the day set in, to their log-hut, in front of which they were now standing beside their saddled horses.

Just at that moment their guide stalked out from behind the hut, leading his horse by the bridle; and a very striking figure he was.

His sharp vulture-like features, and the coppery hue of his scantily-clad body, showed him to be an Indian.

His name of Mahtochuga (Little Bear) seemed anything but appropriate to a man over six feet in height, and so gaunt and sinewy that he looked much more like a prairie wolf than a bear.

The single lock of coarse hair that stood out from the old warrior's shaven crown was now white as snow.

But old as he was, one could see by his keen bright eye, and the panther-like nimbleness of all his movements, that he bade fair to outlive many a younger man yet.

He spoke not a word, but simply pointed southward, and springing into his saddle, rode off, followed at once by the three Englishmen, while a sturdy figure with hair and beard as red as its tattered shirt, suddenly appeared in the doorway of the log-hut, shouted after them a lusty "Good-fortune to you, boys!"

Away they went merrily enough, keeping up a constant talk and laughter which contrasted very markedly with the stern silence of the old Indian, who went straight onward without even opening his lips.

The three horsemen would gladly have put their horses to speed, and raced each other all the way; but this was impossible amid that endless jungle of tall prairie-grass, dry as tinder from the long-continued heat and so high as in many places to brush their shoulders.

"No smoking allowed here, boys," said Dick Harrison.

"If one spark falls among this stuff, there would be a fine bonfire!"

"Pooh!" cried Tom Melton, "if there were any danger, old Scalptaker in front there would have been sure to let us know.

"See! isn't that our bluff away to the right?"

"It looks like it!"

His two comrades followed his pointing finger with their eyes, and beheld a strange and startling spectacle.

Right in front of them, springing up suddenly from the endless level of the prairie, was the perfect semblance of a colossal head—the head of an Indian chief.

The chin of the colossus seemed to be resting upon the ground, as if the figure were rising slowly out of the depths of the earth.

Its mighty face was turned watchfully toward the east, as though it were standing on guard against the intrusion of the "pale faces."

"Queer-looking thing, isn't it?" said Tom Melton, lowering his voice to a whisper, as if fearing to disturb the spell-bound giant.

"See how old Copperhide yonder is [illegible] sight of it! I wonder if [illegible] up and have a fight with them."

In truth, Mahtochuga's gloomy face had lighted up strangely at the first glimpse of the mighty figure, which doubtless recalled to him many a stirring memory of his past life.

But the momentary gleam of animation faded again just as suddenly.

By the time they reached the foot of the bluff, the three young sportsmen were as hungry as hawks; and they did full justice to the good things which they had brought with them.

Many jokes were made upon the "big chief" in whose shadow they were feasting, and into whose open mouth Dick Harrison, the wag of the party, proposed to empty what was left of their food.

The fun was at its height, when their mirth received a sudden and terrible interruption.

All the time of their meal Mahtochuga had been strangely restless, sniffing the air like a startled deer, and turning his head [illegible]

[illegible]

He [illegible] and [illegible] at last, and was [illegible] his way.

"To horse, pale faces! and ride for your lives!"

Overawed by the terrible emphasis of the old man's tone and manner, three Englishmen mounted at once, though without the least idea what was the matter.

But their horses evidently knew, even if they did not.

Hardly were they in the saddle when their frightened horses darted off across the prairie as if chased by wolves.

What could it all mean?

Look back as they might, they could see nothing particular—except, indeed, a tiny curl of smoke far in the distance, as if some giant were lighting his pipe.

Tom Melton was the first of them to guess the hideous truth.

"You were right, Frank," he gasped hoarsely; "it's life or death with us now. The prairie's on fire!"

All that followed was like an ugly dream.

They were dimly conscious of scurrying frantically through a forest of tall grass with the hot breath of the destroyer coming closer and closer upon their trail, and a glare overhead as if the whole sky was on fire, while past them flew a terrified crowd of wolves, prairie-dogs, deer, ravens, vultures, and ever and anon a herd of huge black buffaloes, filling the air with hoarse bellowings of terror.

But swift as their pace was, the fire was swifter, and the roar and crackle of the flames came nearer and nearer, till it seemed as if the conflagration were at their very heels.

Frank Sedgwick's horse began to show signs of failing; and the dismounted men clenched their teeth in desperation.

But just as all hope seemed gone, there yawned in front of them one of those vast deep chasms so common on the western prairies, beyond which lay a bare tract that would give no hold to the fire, even should it be carried across the gulf by flying sparks.

It was a fearful leap, but with certain death close behind them, there was no time to hesitate.

One by one they cleared the gap, the Indian foremost; but Sedgwick's tired horse slipped as it alighted on the other side, and Frank Melton had barely time to seize Frank in his strong hands and literally tear him from the saddle, when the poor horse fell helplessly down the precipice with a shrill cry.

"A close shave, boys," said Dick Harrison, drawing a long breath.

"You don't catch me out on the prairie again in the dry season, I can tell you!"

"Nor me either," cried Tom Melton, turning away his scorched face as the flames, surging up along the edge of the chasm, shot long tongues of fire at them across the gulf with a savage roar.

"Nor me either," echoed Sedgwick; and all three kept their word.

WHY A LAMP BURNS.—Girls, as well as boys, need to understand about kerosene explosions.

A great many fatal accidents happen from trying to pour a little kerosene on the fire to make it kindle better, also by pouring oil into a lamp while it is lighted.

Most persons suppose that it is the kerosene itself which explodes, and that if they are very careful to keep the oil itself from being touched by the fire or the light there will be no danger.

But this is not so.

If a can or lamp is left about half full of kerosene oil the oil will dry up—that is, "evaporate"—a little, and will form, by mingling with the air in the upper part, a very explosive gas.

You cannot see this gas any more than you can see air.

But if it is disturbed or driven out and a blaze reaches it, there will be a terrible explosion, although the blaze did not touch the oil.

There are several other liquids used in houses and workshops which will produce an explosive vapor in this way.

Benzine is one; burning fluid is another, and naphtha, alcohol, ether, chloroform may do the same thing.

In a New York workshop lately, there was a can of benzine or gasoline on the floor.

A boy 17 years old lighted a cigarette and threw the burning match on the floor close to the can.

He did not dream there was any danger, because the liquid was corked up in the can.

But there was a great explosion and he was badly hurt. This seems very mysterious.

The probability is that the can had been standing there a good while and a good deal of vapor had formed, some of which had leaked out around the stopper and was hanging in a sort of invisible cloud over and around the can; and this cloud, when the match struck it, exploded.

Suppose a girl tries to fill a kerosene lamp without first blowing it out. Of course the lamp is nearly empty or she would not care to fill it.

This empty space is filled with a cloud of explosive vapor arising from the oil in the lamp.

When she pushes the nozzle of the can into the lamp, fills the empty space and pushes the cloud of explosive vapor up; of course it strikes against the blazing wick which the girl is holding down by one side. The blaze of the wick sets the invisible cloud of vapor a-fire, and there is an explosion.

Hoods, scarfs, ribbons and any fancy articles can be dyed any color or washed with the Diamond Dyes. All the popular colors.

THE PURSUIT.

BY ARION.

I PASSED the best part of my life on the plains, and have met with many adventures, but the one I am about to relate is the most vivid in my memory, as no doubt you will believe when I have related it.

Out on the broad prairie.

There was nothing to disturb our sense of blissful solitude, except the great circle of emigrant wagons drawn up for the night to give us a feeling of companionship without unpleasant proximity.

The whole scene around us breathed of peace, yet, with love's quick insight, I saw there was a cloud over the spirit of one dearer to me than all else.

"What is it Mary?" I asked. "Something troubles you.

"Is it that you begin to doubt the wisdom of your father's move to a wild Western home?

"Not that?

"Then do you regret my imprudence in deciding to seek my fortune also at his side?"

"Harry, I do feel unaccountably depressed this evening; my mind keeps dwelling on [illegible] Barton's oath.

"You remember, he swore that he would follow and snatch me from you before we had crossed the plains in safety.

"You need not tell me that Barton is not here, but I feel frightened all the same."

I did not wonder at my dear one's horror of John Barton's oath.

I too had often thought, with a vague uneasiness, of the livid revengeful countenance [illegible] voice, full of hate and revenge, of Mary's rejected lover, as he stood confronting us on our departure from our native town, and swore a solemn oath that she should never reach her destination, nor ever be my wife.

He received [illegible] word of reply, only a blow from my clenched hand, that laid him prostrate on the road.

Two months had passed since then.

More silently than was our wont we entered the camp, and proceeded toward Mary's wagon home, but to our surprise it was not in its usual position.

We found the missing wagon standing outside the circle.

The driver, a sulky, sullen fellow I had never liked, stood close by it, in close conversation with a dark, heavily-bearded man, who had joined the train a few days before.

Both men hastily withdrew on our approach, but not until I had demanded an explanation of the changed position of the wagon, and received a mumbling reply, to the effect that it would be more sheltered from the cold night winds.

"The horses were unharnessed before I knew it," said Mr. Scott, my dear one's father.

A soft good night to Mary, a lingering pressure of the hand, and then making my way to my wagon, I crept in and lay down to sleep at the side of my trusty dog Rover.

I was aroused by a violent shake from a hand grasping my shoulder.

The hand belonged to Mary's father.

"Harry! Harry! Rouse up! rouse up!"

"Mary?" I gasped, for there was something in the wild looks of the man before me.

"Mary!

Ah! she has been abducted.

[illegible] come, we will talk as we saddle the horses.

I turned only long enough to snatch up my cap and pistols, and then hurried after my friend.

"I was awakened" he said, "by feeling something cast over my head.

"I was bound hand and foot.

"There were two men—I know their voices—one was our driver—and, Harry, the other was John Barton's.

"I saw him too.

"He was the man who joined the train a few days ago.

"He [illegible] disguise.

[illegible]

"I heard them lift her to the ground, and heard the horses moving cautiously away in the darkness.

"And I lay there till the train-master came to rouse me up.

"They have taken our best wagon horses; but though they have hours the start, we'll overhaul them up."

"Thank heaven!" I exclaimed, "that we have two such good horses, and a trusty dog."

Five minutes more and we galloped away from the camp.

On and on we galloped, and Rover galloped on before.

Through the hot sultry day we sped on until just as the sun was sinking, our faithful guide halted, and for the first time that day barked, and came rushing toward us, and laid at our feet a woman's (Mary's) glove.

I snatched up the precious token, and pressing it to my lips felt a paper rustle inside.

[illegible]

[illegible]

"FATHER—HARRY—John Barton has not forgotten his oath.

"I know you will follow [illegible] I keep up my courage, I will [illegible]

behind the horses, which are lying down exhausted, while Barton and our treacherous driver are digging a hole to get water for them.

"I shall place this in my glove, feeling sure that Rover will find it.

"Have no fear for me; if there is need my pony and will defend me, but you will find me before that.

"MARY."

Looking up we saw that Rover and our poor foam flecked horses had found the hole dug by the fugitives.

It must have cost them at least three hours hard work—without implements as they were, and that was so much clear gain to us—a gain of time, and a gain of water, without which our own sturdy animals could not have pushed on very much longer.

We allowed them to crop the short grass for half an hour.

Scarcely was the half-hour passed than we were thundering over the prairies again.

Suddenly as we entered upon a long narrow gulch, closed in by over-hanging rocks on either side, Rover came to an abrupt halt, and crouching low, beat the ground furiously with his tail.

As quickly we drew rein—so quickly indeed that the sudden halt brought my companion's weary horse to his haunches, and then making a fruitless effort to recover himself, the poor animal rolled over on his side, and lay there panting and helpless, while his companion with difficulty succeeded in freeing himself from the stirrups.

And still faithful Rover crouched on the ground, his eyes flashing but not a sound did he utter.

So, knowing the dog as I did, my heart leaped at the knowledge that he had at last "run his prey to earth."

With a whispered caution to Mr. Scott to follow softly on foot, and to keep Rover back, I rode quietly on, keeping a sharp watch for the group I felt sure were very near at hand.

Suddenly, out of the midst of the deep silence of the night sounded the voice I loved so dearly, raised, not in fear, but in stern warning and menace.

The ground was soft, and my gallant Fleetfoot's hoofs fell noiselessly on the turf, and so it was that, turning a sharp corner, I came at once upon a group totally unaware of my approach—Mary standing erect and unflinching, John Barton recoiling before her upraised pontard.

"Villain! scoundrel!" I shouted, "defend yourself!"

My finger was on the trigger of my pistol, but he was quicker than I, and even as I spoke a bullet whistled through my cap.

The sound of Barton's pistol seemed to rouse my horse to sudden fury, he made one leap to Barton's side, and then rearing struck at him with his forelegs.

There was a fierce, half-stifled oath, a dull, crushing sound, and John Barton lay prone on the ground, dead.

I leaped to the ground, and clasped my beloved one in my arms, safe and uninjured.

So full of thankfulness was my heart that I did not regret our treacherous driver had escaped unharmed, as I supposed.

But when Mary's father joined us he told a different tale.

"The fellow was in such a hurry to escape you," said he, "that he nearly rode over me before he saw me at all; then he fired a hasty shot and I returned the compliment, and saw his left arm drop helplessly at his side, so he has a broken arm as payment for his audacity."

We dug a grave in the lonely valley, and laid therein the erring man, whose evil passions had wrought his doom.

After three days of moderate riding, we rejoined our comrades of the emigrant train, amidst cheers and expressions of delight.

A JAPANESE WEDDING.—The bride is taken to the house of the groom in a covered chair, while lanterns are carried in advance, and all her household goods are borne ahead by the invited company. The bridegroom is in his house to receive his bride. When she enters, he seats her by his side, and the friends and guests are [illegible] in two rows on each side of them. When all are seated, warm sake is presented to the young couple by a young boy and girl. These must be the children of parents still living, who are termed in Japanese Mecho, Ocho, or male and female butterflies. After partaking of the loving cup of sake they are led by the butterflies into another apartment, where their bed is prepared. Here they drink together to the toast, which they both repeat: "Much happiness for many years to come." A grand banqueting time is then indulged in by the [illegible] The [illegible] the records [illegible] her parents at home is signalized by a great feast in commemoration of the event."

AYER'S CHERRY PECTORAL possesses far-reaching and powerful [illegible] which its persistent use will [illegible] any case of colds, coughs, throat [illegible] troubles, while its soothing and rest-[illegible] effects are realized at once.

A COMMON STORY.

BY MRS. MULOCK CRAIK.

My old love, whom I loved not,
Is this your friendly hand?
Your voice, with a tremble in it,
None else could understand?
My old love whom I love not!
After so many years,
Parting in silence and in pain,
To meet with smiles, not tears.

My love whom I loved not,
Do you regret—not I!—
That all died out which best were dead
All lived which could not die?
Till at the last we meet here,
And clasp long-empty hands,
Keeping our silent secret safe,
Which no one understands.

You will leave a name behind you,
A life pure, calm and long;
But mine will fade from human ear,
Like a forgotten song.
You have lived to smile serenely
Over a grief long dead;
You will die with children round your bed,
But I shall die alone.

O kind love, whom I loved not!
O faithful, dear and true!
Did one friend linger near my grave,
I think it would be you.
Could I wish one heart to hold me,
A little unforgot,
I think 'twould be that heart of yours,
My love—whom I loved not!

WOLF-CHILDREN.

IN depicting the temper and disposition of the wolf, such adjectives as "ruthless, cunning, and treacherous" are invariably used, and with perfect justice. It would appear, therefore, at first sight, almost incredible that there should be many instances on record where children have been carried away, and instead of being devoured, as would have assuredly been the case had the marauder been a panther or leopard, they have been suckled, tended, and reared by them. Some of these have afterwards been recovered; and at this writing there exists a specimen of wolf-child at Secundra, a small missionary station a few miles from Agra; so that the story of Romulus and Remus may not be so entirely without foundation as we have been hitherto led to suppose.

Wolves as a rule prey upon the flocks and herds of the inhabitants of the villages in whose neighborhood they make their dens, and upon such wild animals as they can hunt down and capture.

Among these latter may be mentioned the gazelle-antelope and the black-buck; and many and ingenious are the devices they resort to in order to achieve their purpose. But in the northwestern provinces of India, about Agra, in Oude and Rajpootana, they are very destructive to children.

Hindoos of all classes are exceedingly superstitious regarding the destruction of these predatory brutes, and consider the individual who has been unfortunate enough to shed a drop of wolf's blood, doomed to suffer some grievous calamity. Hence, though a government reward of three rupees per head is offered, it is only the very lowest of all castes—the "Domes or Dungars," as they are called—who will snare and destroy wolves.

These people lead a vagrant life, and bivouac in the jungles, and have no dread of killing any living thing.

The following hypothesis may explain how it comes to pass that so cruel and relentless an animal as the wolf should sometimes be found enacting the very interesting part of foster-mother to one of the human species:

A female with cubs goes prowling around in search of food for its young, and succeeds in ravishing an Indian home of its infant for that purpose. The cubs for some reason or other—certainly not over-sensitiveness, but perhaps because their carnivorous instincts are as yet comparatively dormant—merely lick the child all over. This probably, according to the code of wolfish etiquette, is equivalent to having eaten salt with an Arab, and the infant is henceforth adopted by the parent, suckled, and brought up with the cubs.

Although the human tendency is to go on two legs, we know that even amongst ourselves babies commence by crawling. Now, man is essentially an imitative animal, and seeing the wolves going on all-fours, the alien naturally tries the same method of progression. It would appear, however, that it has found the hands ill-adapted for use in lieu of forefeet, and as a rule the elbows are employed for that purpose; in consequence of this choice the knees, too, have to be used instead of the feet, and hence horny excrescences are usually found on both the knees and the elbows.

Perhaps the subjoined true narrative of a child that had been captured in India, may prove interesting:

There is now in Sultanpore a boy who was found in a wolf's den, about two and a half years ago. A trooper, sent by the native governor to the district to demand the payment of some revenue, was passing along when he saw a large female wolf leave her den, followed by three whelps and a boy. The boy went on all fours, and was on the best possible terms with the dam and her whelps. Discovering the trooper, they beat a hasty retreat to their den, the boy making as good time as any of them. The trooper assembled some people, and attempted to dig them out. When they had dug some seven feet into the den, the wolf escaped with her cubs and the boy. They were pursued by the trooper on horseback, who finally overtook and captured the boy. He was taken to the village, and all efforts to make him speak only brought forth a growl or a snarl. On the approach of a grown-up person he became alarmed, and when a child came near him he snarled and attempted to bite it. He rejected cooked meat, but ate raw meat with a relish, and had no objection to a dog sharing his food with him.

The boy died in the latter part of August. He understood but little of what was said, nor did he appear to take notice of anything going on around him. When hungry he pointed to his mouth, and took his food on all fours, but occasionally he would walk upright. He seemed to care for nothing but eating, and was never heard to utter a single word.

Grains of Gold.

Fixed resolves need short professions.

He who speaks, sows; he who listens, reaps.

Follow after holiness; it will repay your pursuit.

The camel went in search of horns, and lost its ears.

Morality without righteousness is only dress parade.

Pride often miscalculates, and more often misconceives.

As every golden thread is valuable, so is every minute.

It is wisdom to think, and folly to sit without thinking.

To indulge a consciousness of goodness is the way to lose it.

Had there never been a cloud, there had never been a rainbow.

Humility is the great ornament and jewel of the Christian religion.

The one prudence in life is concentration; the one evil is dissipation.

We should never throw off politeness even in our conflicts with coarse people.

Select that course of life which is the best, and custom will render it most pleasant.

A silent hour under the stars may whisper to your soul great thoughts of eternity.

If we find no faults in ourselves, we should not take pleasure in observing those of others.

Those who have no patience of their own forget what demand they make on that of others.

Do not wait for extraordinary occasions to do good actions; try to use common situations.

None are ruined by the justice of God but those who hate to be reformed by the grace of God.

Whatever you win in life you must conquer by your own efforts, and then it is yours—a part of yourself.

The darkest chapter in the nature of man is the tendency to pull down the reputation of his fellow-man.

Be courageous and noble-minded; our own heart, and not other men's opinions of us, forms our true honor.

Fishermen, in order to handle eels, cover them with dirt. In like manner does detraction strive to grasp excellence.

Christ came not to talk about a beautiful light, but to be that light—not to speculate about virtue, but to be virtue.

The years write their records on human hearts as they do on trees, in inner circles of growth which no eye can see.

Every duty well done adds to the moral and spiritual stature. Each opportunity grasped is the key to larger privileges.

Like a beautiful flower, full of color, but without scent, are the fine but fruitless words of him who does not act accordingly.

It is difficult to blend and unite tranquillity in accepting, and energy in using, the facts of life—but it is not impossible to be happy.

Help others, and you relieve yourself. Go out and drive away the cloud from a depressed friend's brow, and you will return with a far lighter heart.

Femininities.

Dennis Kearney has joined the woman suffragists.

The woman question—"Did you bring me that extra money?"

A young lady, Miss S. C. Clark, has been appointed treasurer of a savings bank in Exeter, N. H.

Eva, noticing a flock of noisy, chattering blackbirds, said: "Mamma, I guess they're having a sewing 'cicty.'"

The meanest woman on record is the one who boiled codfish in a fire-proof safe to keep her neighbors from smelling it.

Yellow-haired girls have taken to the wearing of velvet coats of a reddish chocolate hue in order to emphasize the lustre of their locks.

The Maryland Court of Appeals unanimously sustains the new law of that State, under which a man may be flogged for beating his wife.

It is estimated that as many as 4000 women are annually caught stealing from the stores in Paris—an incredibly large proportion being titled ladies.

Mrs. Gladstone, writes a London correspondent, who is one of the best and kindest women in the world, has the unhappy knack of dressing abominably.

An organist in a church at Providence, R. I., relieved the monotony of waiting for a belated bridal party by playing: "Oh, dear, what can the matter be?"

"I have no wealth," she said; "I can give you only my hand and heart." And then he thought that if her heart was as big as her hand, she was indeed wealthy.

The meanest slight a girl can put upon an admirer is to use a postal-card in refusing an offer of of marriage. It proves that she doesn't care two cents for him.

The difference between a long and short yarn is very well illustrated by the difference of one's feelings in holding a skein for one's grandmother, or for one's sweetheart.

It takes but thirteen minutes to lead an elephant on a train, while it takes twenty for any sort of woman to kiss her friends good-by and lose the check for her trunk.

A New York girl who was last October engaged to a man whom she was to marry in May, has consented to act as bridesmaid to the young lady he has finally decided to wed.

A lady in Norwich, Conn., seventy-two years of age, had just begun to take lessons on the pianoforte, greatly to her own pleasure, however it may be with the other members of her household.

A girl in this city was recently arrested for being disguised as an old woman. If all the old women who appear in the disguise of girls were arrested, the jails would have the appearance of sardine boxes.

"I say," exclaimed Brown, "that Charley is wholly unselfish in his affection; he loves the very ground she walks on." "Yes," said Jones, "I don't doubt it—when she is walking on her father's estate."

"Does your Helen remind you of Helen of Troy?" she asked sweetly, as the sofa-springs flattened under a pressure of 160 pounds. "No—you remind me more of Helen of Avoirdupois," was the scaly reply.

The beauty of our fair ones gives point to our spears, and edge to our swords; their words are our law; and as soon will a lamp shed lustre when unkindled, as a knight distinguish himself by feats of arms, having no mistress of his affection.

Whether the baby boy's name should be John Frederick, or Edward Gordon, has caused a divorce suit in a Chicago court between Mr. and Mrs. Jones. Chicago is the place where the trains stop fifteen minutes to enable passengers to get divorces.

"You grow more like your father every day!" sharply exclaimed the mother, irritated at some slight misconduct of her seven-year-old boy. For three days after that the boy went to the looking-glass a dozen times to see if his nose was getting red like his father's.

A certain lady painted a placque in the most exquisite manner, and sent it to a friend. Soon after a note of acknowledgment came, in which the lady stated that it was altogether too nice to use every day, so she would only use it for a bread-plate when she had company.

The law of compensation: Maud—"Isn't it strange, dear, all the fellows who flirt with me are married men! I cannot imagine what has become of all the bachelors." Gertrude (who is not envious—oh, dear, no)—"Possibly they are flirting with the wives of your admirers."

Mrs. Benjamin Tyler, of Branford, who had been without the power of speech for fifteen years, recently fell from a chair, and the shock restored her speech. Ladies should be more careful when they sit down. Sometimes the most disastrous consequences follow a little carelessness in this matter.

"Willyim, my boy," says an economical mother to her son, "for mercy's sake don't keep on tramping up and down the floor in that manner. You'll wear out your boots." He sits down. "There you go—sitting down. Now you'll wear out your new trousers! Well, I declare, I never see such a boy!"

The young lady of the adjective was standing on the depot platform yesterday, and casting a wistful glance across the barren fields, sighed wearily: "It is really horridly, awfully mean that such charming, lovely fun on the deliciously smooth ice should be destroyed by the hateful glare of a scorching sun."

After a Wisconsin clergyman had preached a sermon against the sin of wearing finery, a Mr. Thomas went home and tore a silk dress off his wife. Then Mrs. Thomas smashed his gold watch. And it must have done the preacher's heart good to see how disposed his hearers were to carry out his teachings to the very letter.

News Notes.

The finest shops in a Chinese city are those devoted to the sale of coffins.

Wealthy cattle owners in South Africa number their herds by the thousand head.

Queen Victoria is much opposed to female practitioners of medicine in England.

The canary bird was first carried to England from the Canary Islands about the year 1500.

Melbourne produced 1,078,446 ounces of gold last year, about one-third of which was exported.

A Minnesota man had himself baptized in a hole in the ice when mercury was down to 35° below zero.

A bridge went down the Ohio river during the recent floods at the rate of one hundred and fifty miles a day.

Japan has 113 newspapers, besides 133 miscellaneous publications, and her newspaper circulation is 53,500,000.

Germany is burying its telegraph wires, and has already completed an elaborate system of subterranean cables.

There are now only 36 establishments in Cologne each selling the true and only genuine eau. In 1820 there were 60.

The United States is worth $50,000,000,000, or $9,000,000,000 more than England, and $13,000,000,000 more than France.

The Polish novelist, J. J. Kraszewski, is probably the most voluminous of living writers, he having published 450 novels.

American mules imported for the use of the British army, do not take kindly to the diet of beans on which Spanish mules are fed.

The real estate agents of Chicago have undertaken, by means of a black list, to protect themselves against tenants who do not pay.

All the existing portraits of Gambetta are taken in profile. He had but one eye, and always refused to allow his full face to be photographed.

A new railroad, now in course of building in North Carolina, twelve miles long, is to be owned and operated altogether by colored men.

At a recent wedding in New York, gates formed of white roses separated the family friends from the others present during the church ceremony.

An African spider, which spins silk-like thread, has been discovered, and French silk manufacturers talk of attempting to introduce it in France.

"Thirty-five Ways of Popping the Question" is the title of a work recently published in England. The examples are taken from love scenes in novels.

In the heart of a Bucksport, Me., oak tree a wood-chopper found a diamond-pin with twenty-four brilliants. The tree was supposed to be 120 years old.

A leading French physician, in a paper recently read before the Academy of Medicine, says that there are 219,270 houses in France without a single window.

A sneak-thief lived six months in Chicago at the cost to the public library of thousands of dollars. He stole rare books, and sold them for a fraction of their worth.

Colorado exempts from taxation for ten years all orchards and groves of timber, and also pays a bounty of two dollars per hundred for trees planted by the highway.

The Scotch Duke of Athole is probably the most extensive tree-planter in the world. During his life he has planted 27,000,000 sprouts, covering 15,000 acres of his private estate.

Members of the Methodist Church at Shelton, Vt., found fault with the Rev. Mr. Wildey for smoking a black clay pipe. The wrangle caused him to resign and accept a charge elsewhere.

In a lecture recently delivered before the Edinburgh Health Society, a certain doctor stated that one of the great causes of overstrain in youth was the vicious system of competitive examination.

The business of canning fruit and vegetables has grown to enormous proportions. Over 52,000,000 cans of tomatoes were packed last year, making one for every man, woman and child in the country.

At Benson, Arizona, the train-men are said to be chary of carrying the usual lanterns about the depot yard, a habit having arisen among the cowboys of trying to snuff them with revolvers from a distance.

A Virginian named Cross dreamed the other night that he was out on a chase, and as the stag turned to lay sprang violently from his bed, and striking upon a chair, received injuries which it is feared will prove fatal.

The Mayor of Tamazula, Mexico, in company with two boon companions, recently amused himself in hanging a sick man to a tree, and then forcibly abducted a beautiful young lady, who has not been seen since.

The organist of Westminster Abbey has invented a new kind of piano, which he calls the vocalion. With one key-board it imitates at the same time the metallic tones of the ordinary instrument and the strains of the human voice.

In a Nevada mining town, now deserted, which once had several thousand inhabitants, Indians are living in abandoned rows of good brick houses, which they have adapted to their tastes as far as possible by knocking out the doors and windows and punching holes in the roofs.

BILIOUS DISORDERS, LIVER COMPLAINTS, Costiveness, Dyspepsia, etc., are speedily removed by Dr. Jayne's Sanative Pills. Forty years use has proved them superior to all other remedies for the cure of the various diseases for which they are recommended. In their action they are mild and certain, and may be taken at any time without risk from exposure.

"Presenting the Bride" Heard From

Brownwood, Tex., Feb. 2, '83.

Editor Post—I received the picture, "Presenting the Bride," in due time, and all who have seen it are delighted with it. You may look for some subscribers from me shortly, as many of my friends expressed a desire to subscribe, and how could they feel otherwise, with such a paper, and such a premium!

D. B.

Yoncolla, Ore., Feb. 3, '83.

Editor Post—Your premium, "Presenting the Bride," came to hand all right. I cannot find language to express my thanks to you for the beautiful premium. I have received many premiums, but yours leads them all. Will send some subscriptions soon.

J. A.

Dubois, Iowa, Feb. 8, '83.

Editor Post—Your premium, "Presenting the Bride," is indeed a beautiful gift of art, and cannot fail to please the most fastidious. Many thanks.

S. M. S.

Milan, Kans., Feb 2, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Your premium picture, "Presenting the Bride," was duly received, and am more than pleased with it. It is by far the handsomest picture I ever saw.

J. P. S.

Brownsville, Minn., Feb 8, '83.

Editor Post—The picture premium, "Presenting the Bride," received. It is beautiful, and I am very much pleased with it. All who have seen the picture think it is just superb. Expect to get you numerous subscribers in a few days.

A. E. C.

Philadelphia, Mo., Feb. 7, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—The picture, "Presenting the Bride," has come to hand, and in good condition. I am much pleased with it, indeed. I have shown it to some of my neighbors, and they all unite with me in voting it beautiful. Will send you some subscribers soon.

M. E. S.

Hoxie, Tex., Feb. 5, 83.

Editor Post—Have received my picture, "Presenting the Bride," and was surprised at its marvelous beauty. I am well pleased with it. I have shown it to several of my friends, and all say it is the handsomest and most valuable premium they ever saw.

J. M.

Roanoke, Va., Feb. 2, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—My beautiful premium Photo-Oleograph, "Presenting the Bride," came duly to hand, and it is even better than you claimed it to be. I will see what I can do for you in the way of new subscribers.

B. D.

Dallas, O., Feb. 6, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Your magnificent premium picture, "Presenting the Bride," at hand, and think it very beautiful. I am greatly pleased with it, and thank you very much for such a beautiful present. I have shown it to quite a number of people, and they all say it is the prettiest and richest premium they have ever had the pleasure of beholding. Will do all that lies in my power to increase your subscription list.

E. B.

Plattsburg, Mo., Feb. 2, '82.

Editor Post—I have received premium, "Presenting the Bride." It far surpasses my most sanguine expectations—perfectly lovely! Will get some subscribers for you.

J. J. B.

Stockbridge, Wis., Feb. 4, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—I received the beautiful picture, "Presenting the Bride," in due time, and am very much pleased with it. It is far ahead of my most sanguine expectations. Shall see what I can do for you in the way of subscribers.

H. J. M.

Timberville, Va., Feb. 3, '83.

Editor Post—"Presenting the Bride" was delivered to me yesterday, and am highly pleased with it. We consider it a gem. Have given it a conspicuous place in our gallery for the inspection of our friends.

S. K. V.

St. Charles, Minn., Feb. 5, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Paper and premium received. THE POST is a splendid literary journal. And the picture is very handsome. Am greatly pleased with it. Everyone who has seen the picture considers it grand.

G. W. B.

Springfield, O., Feb. 8, '82.

Editors Post—I received my premium for The Post, for which accept thanks. It is the most beautiful premium I ever saw.

C. H. W.

Fort Valley, Ga., Feb. 9, '82.

Editor Post—I received your premium picture yesterday all sound, and am very much pleased with it. It is far ahead of the premiums usually offered by newspapers, and certainly ought to bring you many subscribers. Am quite proud of it.

M. P. C.

Bee Creek, Ill., Feb. 3, '82.

Editor Post—I received my Photo-Oleograph, "Presenting the Bride," and think it very beautiful. Had it framed and hung up two hours after its arrival. It is admired by everybody.

R. R.

Sweetwater, Ill, Feb. 7, '82.

Editor Post—I received my premium last night, and think it very beautiful. I will with pleasure aid you in raising your subscription list, and I think I can get a great many subscribers for you.

J. W. P.

McPaul, Iowa, Dec. 3, '82.

Editor Post—The premium picture, "Presenting the Bride" received, and I consider it grand. I have shown it to several of my friends, and each and every one of them pronounce it beautiful.

E. M. C.

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6th. *Set Sweet Voix Celeste Reeds.*
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10th. *Set Clarionet or Celeste Reeds*

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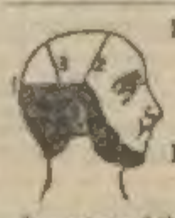

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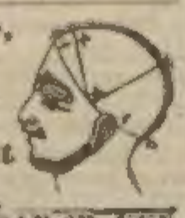

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This Magnificent Engraving represents a gardener who has been working in the garden of a palace, and to whom his wife has just brought his mid-day meal. She carries in her arms the baby, which is reaching out its arms to the father, who has thrown down his spade and extends his brawny arms to the child, while the baby's sister, a little three-year-old, with her dolly in her arms, waits patiently by till her turn shall come to receive the paternal caress. The sunshine streams down upon this group, bringing into strong relief the beautiful figure of the mother, while in the shadow, beyond the garden wall, an inmate of the palace looks on with an expression which indicates that her luxurious surroundings are but a poor substitute for the health and happiness she sees in the faces of the group below. The most delicate details of expression are brought out with vividness, and only on the closest examination by experts can any one discover that it is not the original $12.00 steel engraving. When pictures of such beauty of conception, such faithfulness of outline and of spirit, such truth in all the infinity of detail that good taste demands, can be produced, the day when fine art works are the privilege of the wealthy alone is past.

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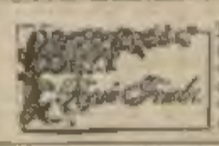

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Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

THE color that is to be adopted in preference to all others this coming spring is gray; every shade of gray is to share in the honors of this popularity: slate gray, mouse gray, silver gray, pearl gray—all will be equally fashionable and universally worn.

The heron, with its softly shaded gray plumage, is to be the favorite bird for ornamenting hats and dresses.

The aigrette of a heron is indeed very lovely, with its fine, curiously interwoven feathers, resembling the veins of a skeleton leaf.

Apropos of hats, we may remind our readers that the Girondin is rapidly dying out in its original form.

The crown has been raised and the brim narrowed until it has attained the form and proportions of the Lignour, which is an essentially elegant and stylish hat, with its plume of feathers and handsome bird's head.

Swedish kid is already very popular for hats; all the best models are made of it and ornamented with ribbed plush and feathers—heron plumes being preferred to any others.

Crowns of bonnets are also pretty and fashionable, composed of a trellis work of gold or silver braid and narrow strips of kid; these are trimmed with pompons of gold or silver braid and plumes of ostrich feather tips.

Ribbon velvet is again much used for strings; a charming black and white capote is a large Toto de Binotte in form composed of jet, with rich jet embroidery draped and caught up at intervals with jet flies.

The only trimming is a plume of white feathers and strings of white ribbon velvet. Hats are pretty with the crown of velvet and the brim only of kid; the favorite colors for trimming them are mandarin and strawberry, either in feathers or loops of velvet mingled with black.

Some of the effects produced by combining three different materials, in distinct shades of strawberry, are really wonderful. For instance, a long rosette is composed of grenat velvet, old pink ottoman, and wild rose colored pink crepe de Chine, giving together quite the appearance of crushed strawberries.

Dresses are made on the same plan, but it is no difficult to make sure of producing the effect desired, that most couturieres simplify matters by making the toilette pale pink and ornamenting it with roses or ribbons in the three shades.

Rich dead silks, sicilliennes, Lyons' silk cloths, and, in short, all gros grain fabrics will remain in vogue this spring.

For evening toilettes no material is prettier and more suitable than embroidered crepe de Chine; this lovely supple fabric is still more lovely in its new form, sprinkled over with a profusion of the most delicate flowers: rosebuds in all shades with golden foliage; pale blue corn-flowers and wild clematis intertwined, all in the most ethereal hues on a background of sky blue, the lightest salmon pink, or ivory white.

Almost as beautiful as these embroidered crepe dresses are those mainly composed of ecru lace.

Tabliers of this thick lace over a colored foundation are extremely elegant, and very elaborate styles are impossible with them; a drapery here and a bouquet of flowers there are almost all the ornamentation they will bear.

Cloth costumes will not be abandoned for some time, but in the most elegant costumes of this material the cloth is simply employed for the redingote.

For instance, with a skirt of sapphire blue velvet, kilted from the waist, a redingote of cigar brown cloth is worn.

The redingote is open in front, with rather long pointed basques at the sides, and very long pleated coat tails at the back, open in the centre.

With this is worn a waistcoat entirely covered with bead embroidery, and ending in very long points, following the outline of the basque of the redingote, but reaching considerably below it.

A style of costume in great favor at present is the skirt of plain velvet with a tunic and corsage of cashmere, and cape of plush lined with colored satin and fastened with brandenbourgs or metal clasps.

The mode is copied from the fur capes worn in England, but the Parisian imitations in plush are far more elegant in themselves and more becoming to the figure.

The skirt of the costume is bordered with three narrow plaitings of satin placed close to the edge.

The tunic is cut with a shawl point in front and small puff at the back, and the bodice is a short Reservista jacket fastened round the waist with a band and metal buckle.

The plush cape must of course harmonize with the toilette, and the costume is universally adopted by young ladies.

Ottoman and sicilienne are still the materials chosen for useful costumes; they are quiet and lady-like in appearance, and can be worn at all times.

Embossed plush on an ottoman ground is employed only for skirts, where it has an extremely good effect; for corsages it is not well adapted.

As a model of the kind of dress made with this material, we may take the following: the skirt of iron gray embossed plush, lightly draped at the back, and finished off with three very narrow pleatings of sicilienne. The tablier quite flat, and bordered at the sides by two redingote panels in pleated sicilienne, lined with silver gray satin.

The corsage is of sicilienne, pointed in front and ending at the back under the drapery, which is fastened up on the corsage.

A rich iron gray dull passementerie encircles the neck, and is carried down to the points of the corsage and continued thence half-way down the panels, where it ends with rich motifs and pendants.

An exquisite short costume seen lately is of old gold Indian cashmere, the skirt covered with an application of foliage in seal brown plush.

At the back there is a pleated skirt and pouf of plush; the corsage is also of plush with a plastron of pleated brown satin, gauged at the throat and waist and puffed on the chest and crossed by tabs of chenille. The corsage is well sloped to fit the figure, and is cut short at the hips.

The tournure is still increasing in size, to the despair of all the votaries of artistic dress, and it is no longer possible to be well dressed without a tournure, or even with a moderately sized one.

Many kinds are made, but the best and most convenient is composed of woollen or silk material furnished with steels and firmly fastened to the front of the skirt. It is divided in two parts and can be worn either long or short.

For evening toilette it is made of black or colored satin, and trimmed with lace or embroidery.

Two flounces placed at the edge cover the lowest steels, and these flounces can be more or less richly trimmed.

Although officers' collars of lace of linen are very generally worn, still the long coquille lace now is seen, being too becoming to be put aside.

The large Marie-Antoinette fichu is also worn as much as ever, made of silk batiste, with two long rounded ends draped at will over a corsage open en coeur, either with natural flowers in front, or with a jewelled clasp on the shoulder.

Plastrons with long moyen age points, with cuffs to match, are extensively patronised by ladies past their youth; they are made principally of old point or Brussels lace.

The cuffs are worn on long sleeves, mousquetaire fashion, or with elbow sleeves on a satin lining of the same color as the dress.

Plain lingerie is most adopted for morning wear, but rich embroideries and laces are used to trim more dressy costumes.

Many black dresses are made with full ruches of black lace at the neck and sleeves, and are much more becoming than crape ruches, which are no longer worn.

Fireside Chat.

[CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.]

FROM *gateau Chantilly* Miss Parloa turned to the filling for the *vol-au-vent*, which she made as follows:

Boil a quart of oysters in their own liquor. As soon as scum arises, skim it off. Drain the oysters and return half a pint of the liquor to the sauce pan.

Mix a scant tablespoonful of flour with two heaping tablespoonfuls of butter, and when the mixture is light and creamy, gradually turn upon it the boiling oyster liquor.

Season well with salt and pepper and possibly with a bare suggestion of nutmeg or mace.

After boiling up once, add three tablespoonfuls of cream and also the oysters. Stir over the fire half a minute; then fill the *vol-au-vent* and serve immediately.

Miss Parloa impressed upon her hearers the importance of using "cold-process" flour for puff paste, and also the need of working the butter properly and attending carefully to the baking.

At the close of the lecture the dishes made during the morning were served to the audience.

On Tuesday afternoon Miss Parloa opened her lecture by giving these recipes for eclairs: Put a cupful of boiling water and half a cupful of butter into a large saucepan, and when the mixture boils up turn in a pint of flour.

Beat well with a vegetable masher, and when it is perfectly smooth and velvety to the touch remove from the fire. Break five eggs into a bowl, and when the paste is nearly cold beat the eggs into it with the hand.

Only a small part of the broken eggs should be added at one time.

When the mixture has been thoroughly beaten, say in twenty minutes, spread on buttered sheets in oblong pieces about four inches long and one and a half wide.

These pieces must be laid about two inches apart, and must be baked in a rather quick oven for about twenty-five minutes. As soon as they are baked, ice with chocolate or vanilla icing, and when this is cold, cut the eclairs—split them—on one side, and fill.

Chocolate Eclairs.—Put a cupful and a half of milk in a double boiler. Beat together two-thirds of a cupful of sugar, two eggs, one-fourth of a cupful of flour and one-fourth of a teaspoonful of salt, and stir this mixture into the boiling milk. Cook fifteen minutes, stirring frequently. When cold, flavor with a teaspoonful of vanilla extract. Put two squares of scraped chocolate with five tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar and three of boiling water, and stir over the fire until smooth and glossy. Dip the tops of the eclairs into this coating as they come from the oven. When the chocolate icing is dry, cut open the eclairs from the side and fill with cold cream. If a chocolate flavor be desired with the cream, add a tablespoonful of dissolved chocolate.

Vanilla Eclairs.—Make an icing with the whites of two eggs and a cupful and a half of powdered sugar. Flavor with a teaspoonful of vanilla extract. Frost the eclairs, and, when they are dry, open and fill them. They may be filled with cream, sweetened, flavored with vanilla, and whipped to a stiff froth.

Frosting.—The white of an egg, one teacupful of powdered sugar, a tablespoonful of lemon juice. Put the white into a bowl and add sugar gradually, beating with a spoon. When all has been added stir in the lemon juice. If the white of the egg be large it will require a goodly cupful of sugar, and if it be small a scant cupful will suffice. The egg must not be beaten until the sugar has been added. This recipe gives a smooth, tender frosting. The same amount of material, prepared with the whites of the eggs unbeaten, will make one-third less frosting than it will if the eggs be beaten to a stiff froth before the sugar is added, but the frosting will be enough smoother and softer to pay for the use of additional material. Half a teaspoonful of vanilla extract may be used for a flavor.

Cream Cakes.—Make a mixture like that for eclairs, and drop in spoonfuls upon buttered tins, so that the cakes may be round instead of oblong. The cakes should be allowed to bake with a rough surface and should be filled with a mixture like that for chocolate eclairs.

This paste was dropped by tablespoonfuls into boiling lard, and cooked until the fritters cracked open.

Wine and sugar were the accompaniments when the fritters were served, though sugar alone may be used.

The chief dish of the afternoon was the *gateau St. Honore*. This also demanded a paste like eclairs.

Miss Parloa said to butter three pie plates, and after rolling puff or chopped paste very thin, to cover the plates with it.

She then cut off the paste about an inch from the edge all round the plates and spread a thin layer of the cooked paste over the puff paste.

A tube about a half an inch in diameter was put into what is called a pastry bag and the remainder of the eclair paste was turned into the bag and pressed through the tube on to the edges of the plate, where the puff paste had been cut off.

Care was taken to have the border of even thickness all round.

Holes were pricked with a fork in the paste in the centre of the plates, and then the dishes were put in a moderate oven for half an hour.

The remaining paste was made into balls the size of common marbles—three dozen. These were dropped into a pan that had been buttered lightly, and were baked fifteen or twenty minutes.

When the little balls and the paste in the plates had been cooked, the balls were taken up on the tip of a skewer, dipped into the syrup, which made them adhesive, and placed on the border of paste, about two inches apart.

Miss Parloa cautioned her auditors never to stir the syrup, else it would become grained and worthless.

A good plan is to pour part of the syrup into a cup and place the cup in hot water.

That which remains in the saucepan should be kept hot—without boiling—until needed. When all the balls had been used, four dozen French candied cherries were dipped into the syrup and placed between the balls. About fifteen cherries were reserved to garnish the centre of the dish.

The remaining part of the dish was as follows: Whip a pint and a half of cream to a froth.

Soak half a package of gelatine in half a cupful of milk for two hours. Pour upon this composition half a cupful of boiling milk. Place the pan of whipped cream in another of ice-water and sprinkle over it two-thirds of a cupful of sugar and nearly a teaspoonful of vanilla flavor. Strain the gelatine upon this preparation and stir gently from the bottom until a thickening is perceptible. When it will just pour, fill the three plates with it and set them in the ice-chest for half an hour. Garnish the top with the remaining cherries.

Correspondence.

INQUIRER.—No reduction in rates on account of not taking premium. See page 8.

EMMA, (Saratoga, N. Y.)—We do not know any work on mesmerism and clairvoyance which it is worth while to read. Find better employment.

MADELINE, (Newport, N. J.)—His devotion is questionable, and his selfishness is but too evident. As for his real motives, they can be known only to himself. He is no fit partner for any sensible affectionate girl. Send him about his business.

W. S., (New Castle, Ill.)—No man can be an Atheist. He may think himself to be an unbeliever in the existence of a God, and possibly, so far as his intellectual consciousness is concerned, he is atheistic in his prejudices; but in his inner consciousness he is, like other men, the self-witness of a Creator's power and supremacy. We deny the possibility of Atheism.

BEREAVE, (Washington, D. C.)—The usual time is one year, but if you feel that enforced retirement is too great a restraint and do not care for gossip, you can resume your former manner of life just as soon as you choose. Pretended mourning, while longing for the excitement of society, is hypocrisy, and open dealing, though it may provoke comment, is far preferable.

MRS. K. S., (Cumberland, N. J.)—This stirring up of standing water, to see if it is dirty at the bottom, is one of the most short-sighted and foolish practices in the world. The past has passed, and cannot be recalled. As to the present, discharge its duties faithfully and loyally, asking no questions for conscience sake. It is not for a woman to concern herself with such matters; she has only to obey.

GEORGE, (Vermillion, Ill.)—The relationships set up by marriage—for example, that of son-in-law—are technical, and have this effect, so far as the rights growing out of the marriage are concerned. Whether the relationship continues to exist after the death of the wife must depend upon the character of the settlement. It is a purely legal question in each individual case.

P. M., (Camden, N. J.)—A young gentleman on being introduced to a young lady should merely make a graceful bow. It is the prerogative of the lady whether or not conversation is entered into afterwards. A gentleman on meeting a lady in the street should lift his hat to her, but not until the lady recognizes him. If she does not choose to recognize him he must pass on without taking any notice of her.

HEATHER, (Callaway, Mo.)—The superstitious belief in good days or evil days has more or less prevailed in all ages and countries; and no season of the year, no month or week has been free from them. From ancient Egypt the unlucky days have received the name of Egyptian days. The Romans had their *dies atri* and *dies albi*. The *atri* were pointed out in their calendar with a black character, the *albi* with a white, the former denoting a day of bad success, the latter of good.

MERRION, (New York, N. Y.)—"Confess your faults one to another." You will find it better and happier to avow the errors committed, or at least state the fact that what you said was not true. This avowal or general statement should, of course, be made directly to the person to whom the first assertion was made. You are not bound to tell anything you may desire to keep secret, but a straightforward and honorable refusal is the proper line of conduct; neither prevarication nor plain untruthfulness can be right or leave your mind at rest.

FRANK, (Phila., Pa.)—Hermits are men who retire to places to avoid persecution; they lodge in caves and cells:

"Where from the mountain's grassy side,
Their guiltless feast they bring:
A scrip with herbs and fruits supply'd,
And water from the spring."

The first hermit was Paul, of Thebes, in Egypt, who lived about the year 250; the second was St. Anthony, also of Egypt, who died in 345, at the age of 105 years.

M. E. W., (Posey, Ind.)—Your friend is really wise in looking far ahead. Illness, accident, misfortune, family cares and charges, have all to be taken into account; and, seeing that these, or most of them, are almost inevitable, and that the present outlook is anything but favorable, he has wisely decided to forego what to all appearance is the ardent desire of his heart. His life's education, so far as we can judge, has been sound; for the worst training which teaches self-denial is better than the best which teaches everything else, and not that. Write as to what you propose to do—a very wise decision—and ask if the determination is approved. In any case the key of your content at present is patience.

VIOLET, (Albemarle, Va.)—When the stamp is stuck on crookedly or upside down, it signifies that the writer was in a hurry or very careless; when the stamp is at the left-hand corner of the envelope, it shows that the writer is either unaccustomed to sending letters, or writes to give the post-office clerk extra trouble: when there is a thumb-mark on the stamp, it signifies that the writer's hands were in need of soap and water. A flirtation, like a quarrel, requires two parties. No gentleman, or any one else, can carry on a flirtation alone. If Violet simply respects herself, and declines to take any notice of signals and smiles, there will be no flirtation to keep on or to drop, and this is the only sensible and proper course to pursue.

BLUSH, (Monroe, Wis.)—It is not, of course, easy to obtain command of the nerves supplying the blood so as to blush at will, or, conversely, resist the tendency to blush. As a general rule, it is wrong, and does harm, to direct the attention to any trick of habit or weakness of which we desire to be rid. This matter of blushing however is an exception to the rule; and, if a resolute attempt be made to blush at pleasure and purposely, this endeavor will so disturb and break up the habit of blushing unconsciously—or perhaps we ought to say sub-consciously—that it will no longer prove a source of annoyance. The habit of blushing has for its cause a too close functional connection between the thinking faculty and that part of the nervous system which regulates the size of the blood-vessels, and makes us either blush or turn pale as fancy or "feeling" may determine. The plan of treatment we recommend is to endeavor to obtain control of the function, and in many cases we have found that this effort cures the evil.